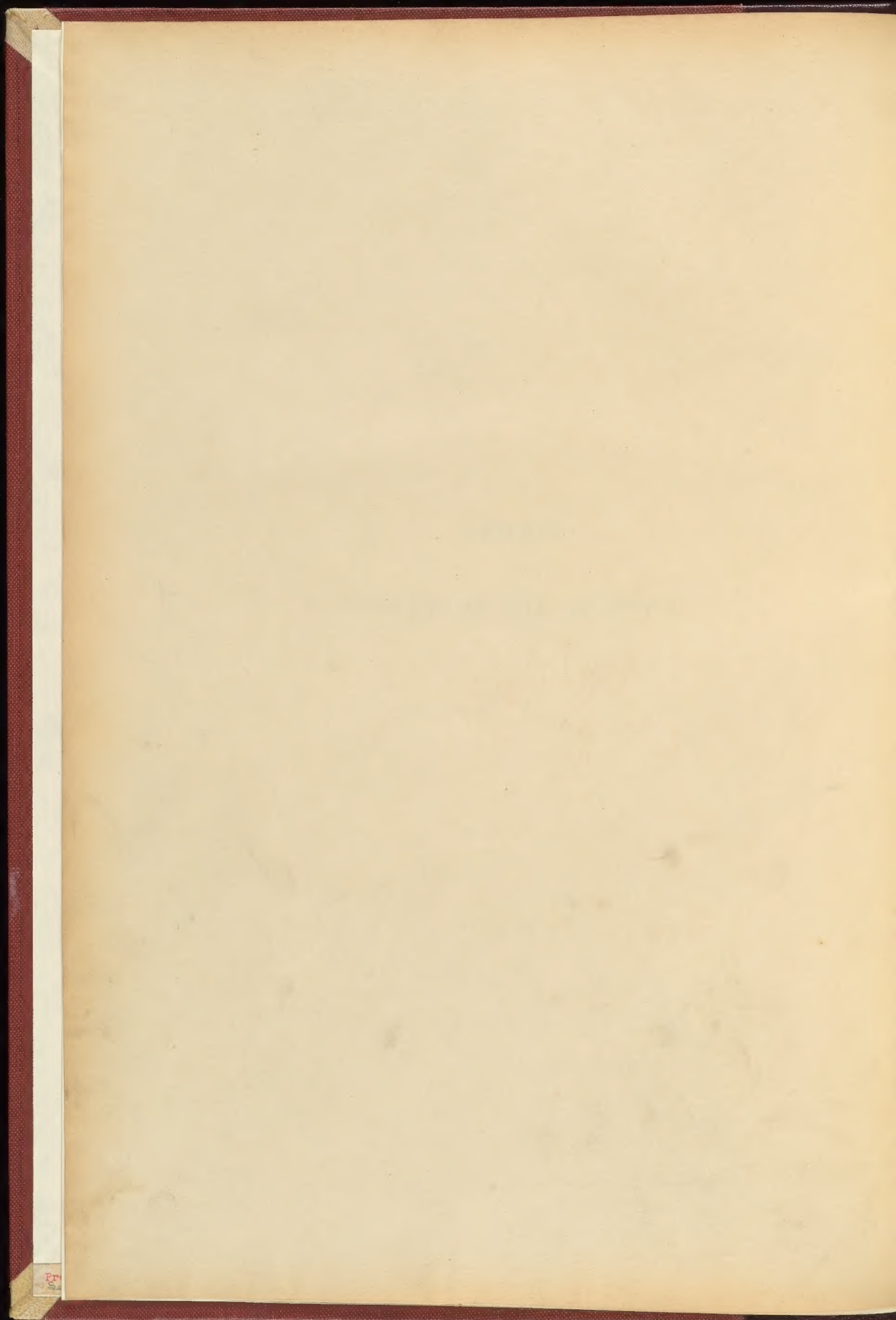




SOCIETY
OF
FRENCH AQUARELLISTS



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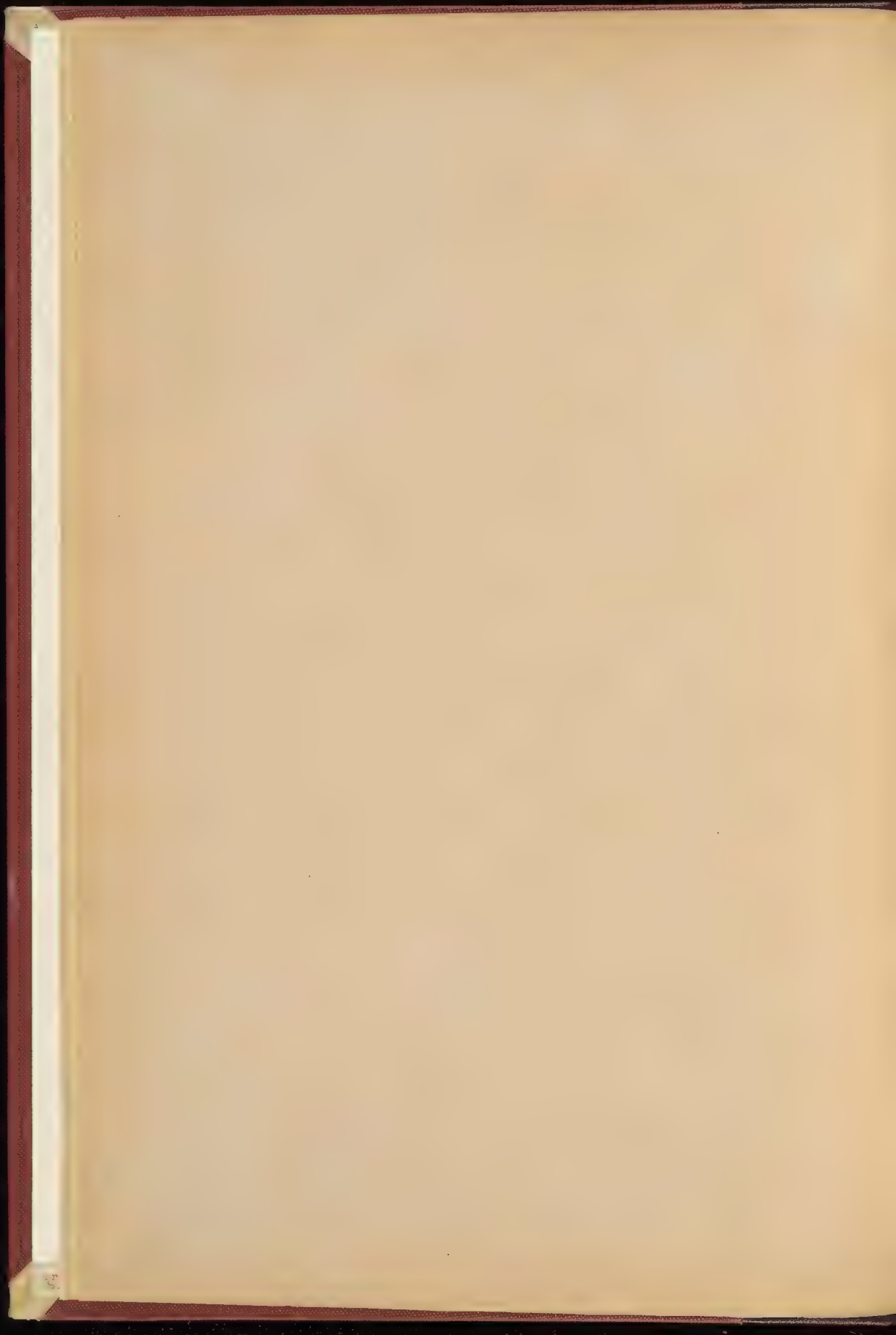
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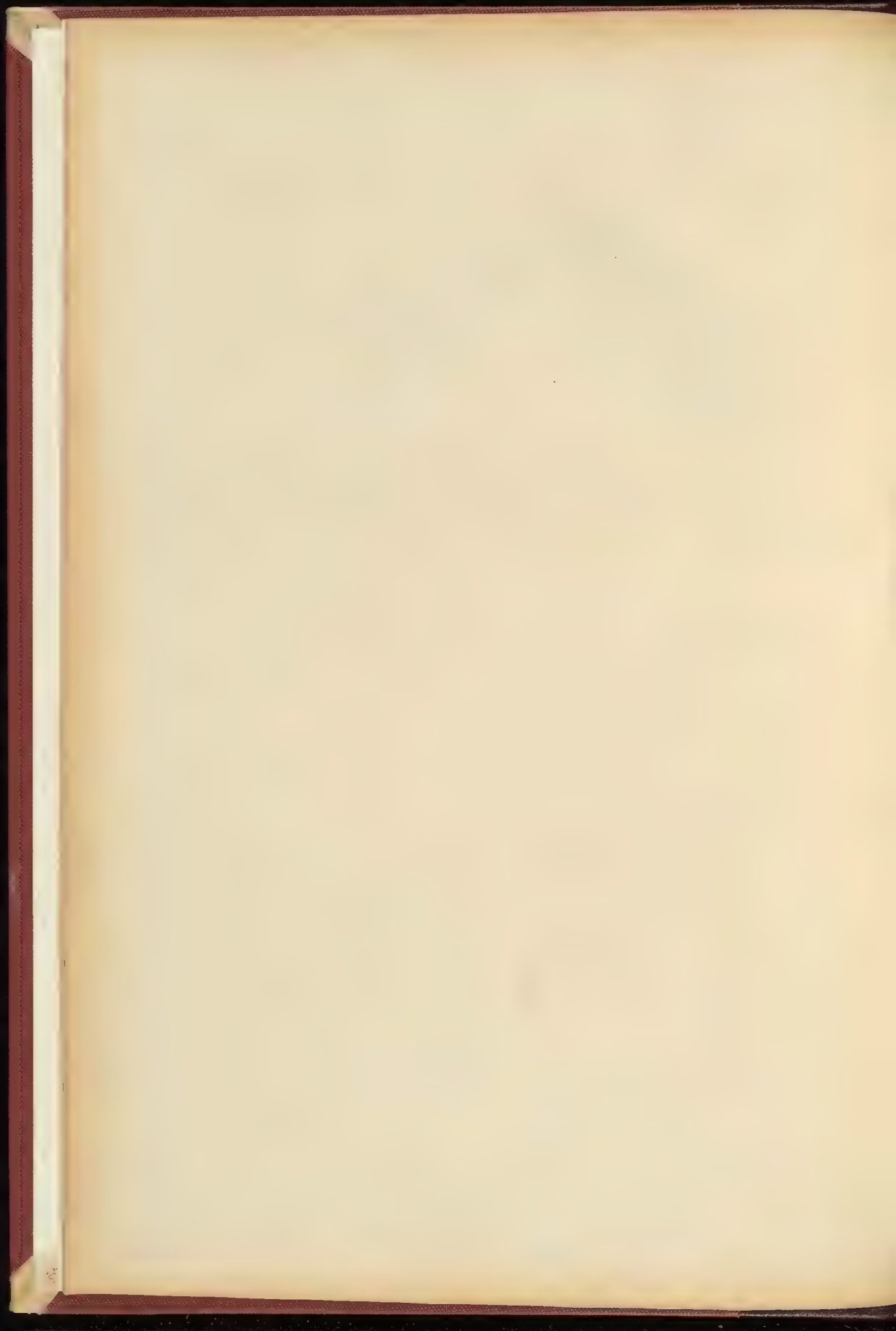
SOCIETY

OF

FRENCH AQUARELLISTS

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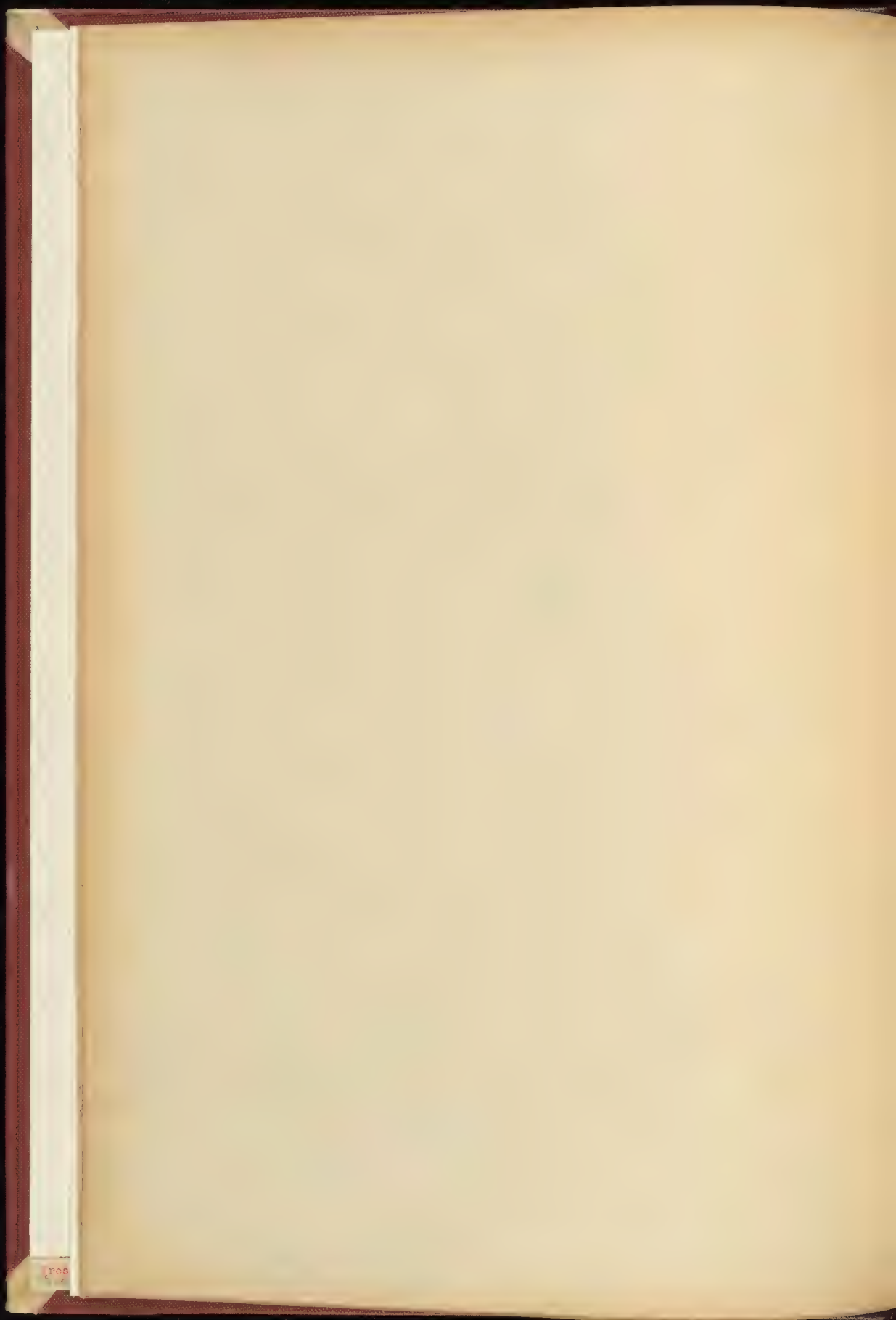
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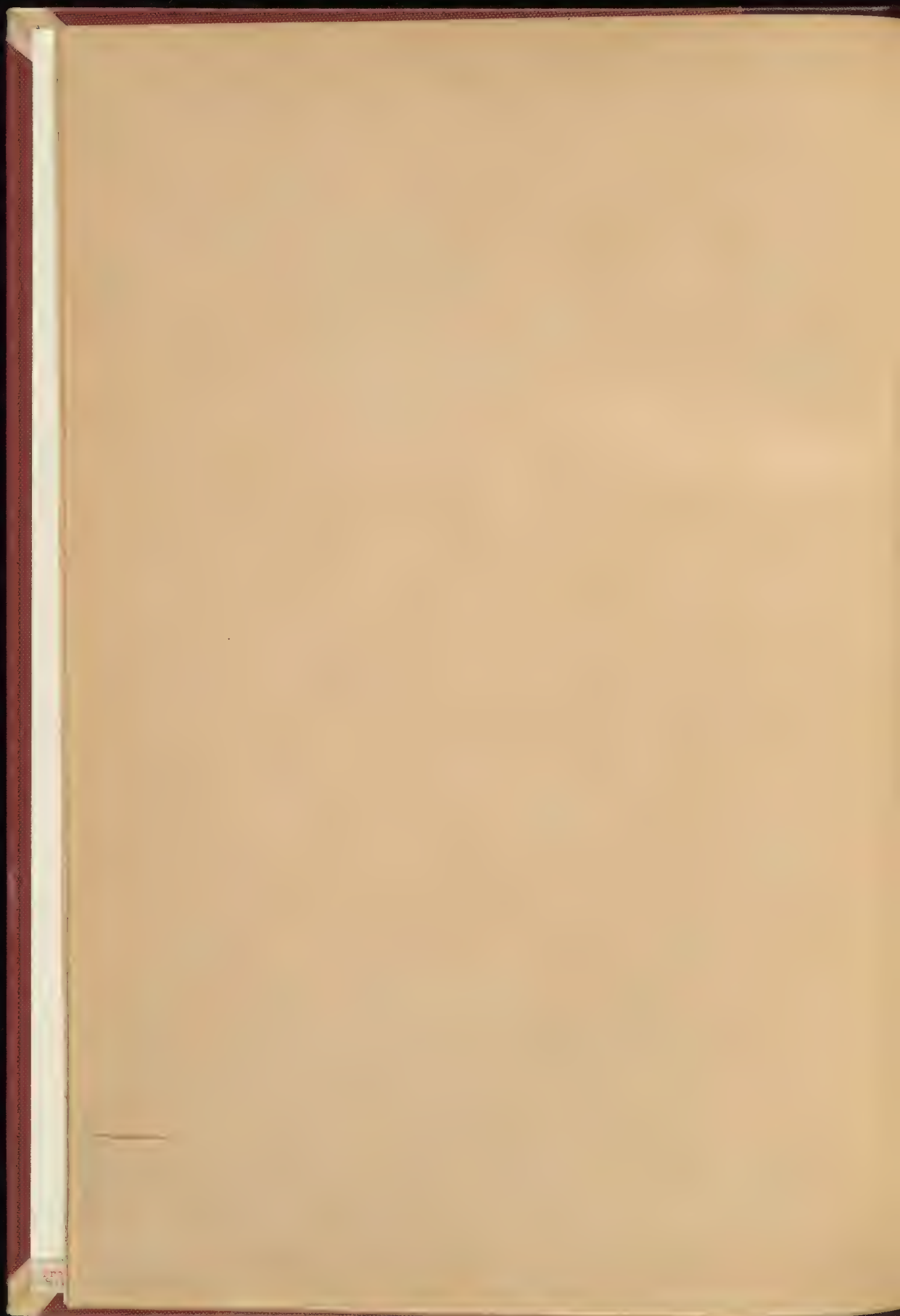
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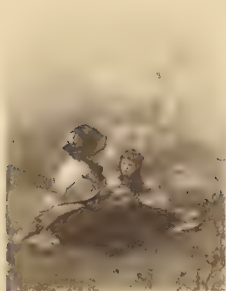
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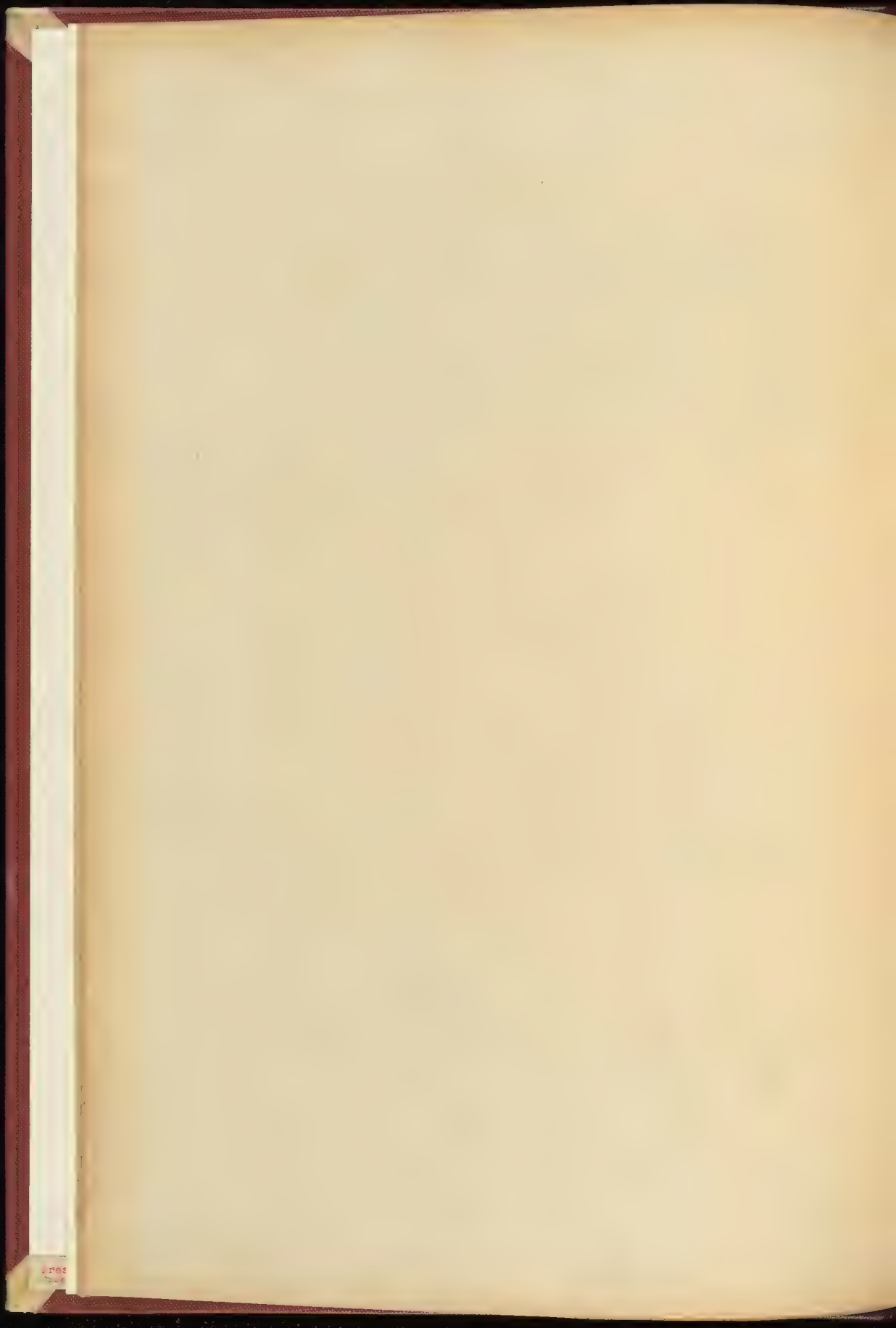
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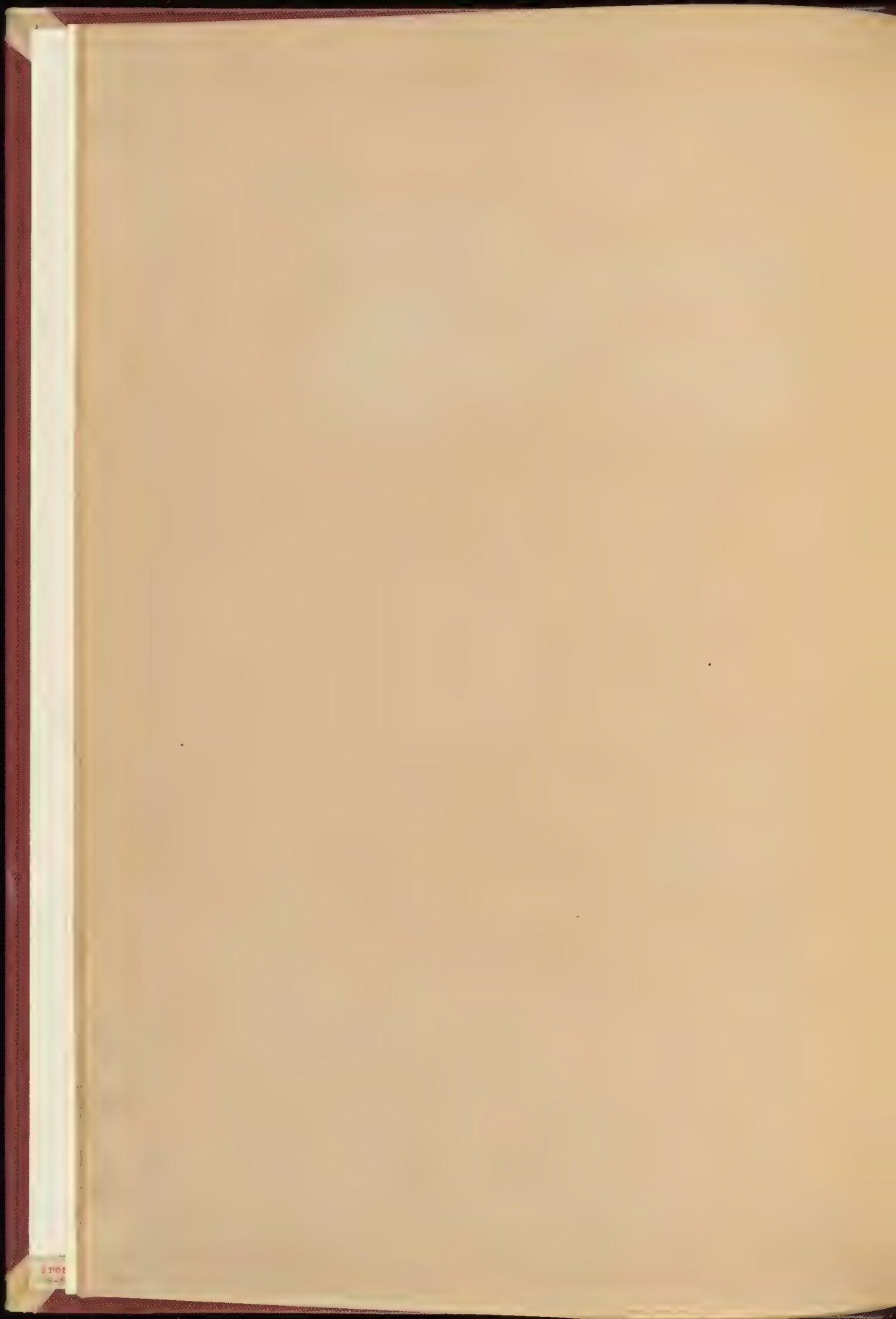














FERDINAND HEILBUTH

Ferdinand Heilbuth is in the flower of his age ; he is just arrived at that moment when one looks over the vanished years, having the sense of the worth of time and of what he brings with him when one knows how to use him nobly, without being too anxious to proclaim their number.



Life is still a fine thing for an artist in love with his art and having no longer any other pleasures than those which labor gives him. To the turmoil of youthful years have succeeded the assurance of maturity, experiences dearly bought, and a knowledge of life which has not begotten bitterness, because each effort has been crowned with success, and because every aim has reached the target. And then, the practical part of life has no longer any complications and needs no new

efforts. Art alone is the subject of each hour's planning; one nurses one's glory; one is conscious of the position one has acquired, of a name justly held in honor; one thinks of the standard to be upheld, of the reputation founded, of what is owing to the public and to one's self; and one quickly becomes an impartial and severe critic.

I hardly know, among the painters of that generation—those pupils of Picot, Drolling, Delaroche, and Robert-Fleury,—those who have doubled the cape of their fifty years—an artist remaining so young as the artist called formerly (for Heilbuth has a “formerly”) the “Painter of Cardinals.” Has he himself appreciated his advantages in this kind, people are already remarking. I do not know. It is found at any rate, that accordingly as he advances



in life he
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bring old age upon his mind, or his body, or his invention; that he weds his art-utopias more ardently than any one, those utopias which are new for each generation; and that no one has been a better protector for the more or less rash innovators who contribute more or less truth to the theory and the practice of art. While some are proclaiming our decline, others are crying progress; and between the two parties a man can be more liberal when his own horizons are open towards many points at once; he can face coolly all the experiments that are making, and can now and then derive from them a profitable hint, instead of denying everything as an infidel or adoring everything as an idolater. In the drama, in the art of poetry, in the plastic arts, and in science itself, wo to those who cannot understand the language spoken by the younger men; who do not lend an ear to their lusty discourse, that they may strengthen themselves in

the confused noises that arise; who do not discern which is the voice of error and which is the part of the better reason, the voice of the future and that of the effervescence and boiling of the sap. Action and reaction is the history of the entire world, the history of France above all; the reaction has pronounced in favor of those who, twenty years ago, proclaimed themselves the future; and it is so loud that the hardy partisans of yesterday, in the midst of the clamors of the neophytes, seem to-day the backsliders. But a discerning spirit, an artist sensitive and curious towards all new form and expression, who from the first has placed the innovators in their true rank, neither too high nor too low, need retract nothing from his healthy criticism of other days.

We should do justice to that peculiar sense which guides an artist in the path of truth. It may be boldly affirmed that Heilbuth, at no period of his career, whether in his execution or his conception, has committed himself



to the *intransigentes* or the wild romanticists; but those who are familiar with the works of art with which he liked to surround himself as long as twenty years ago, will bear him witness, that wherever there was an example showing some new device to express light or the envelope of air, or life, or movement, or faithful interpretation of Nature, he has done more than

merely follow admiringly and become interested; he has proved his sympathy by deeds that are anything but platonic. The present day—what was the future for the men then under discussion—has come to his side, exactly in the degree of his approval.

Let us follow the artist in the development of his career, let us see what were his meanderings, or rather his successive developments; how he freed



himself from the tradition, the habits, and the formulæ of thinking and expressing inculcated by his early education, or by the hazard of friendships, and the mixed world of the art-schools. In coming away from a professor you feel the weight of all sorts of oppression; you cannot yet explore a new road, you enter upon that which has been indicated to you; and, if you are well endowed by Nature, ten years will pass and

find you, in general, an artist by reflection, a new edition of a well-known volume, with some *variae lectiones* to prove that you have your individual tendencies. This decade, which passes for Heilbuth between 1852 and 1862, finds him oscillating between genre painting and historical painting, and, one after another, he sends to the Paris Exhibitions those canvases which earn him his earlier successes: "Rubens introducing Brauer to his wife," "The Son of Titian," "Lucas Signorelli," "The Declaration," "Tasso at the Court of Ferrara," "A Concert at a Cardinal's," "Coronation of Friedrich von Hunten," "The Dancing Lesson," "The Auto-da-fé," and finally, "The Pawnbroker's" of the Luxembourg Gallery. Such are the titles of his first works, almost all rendered popular by engravings; they

made him, so early as 1861, already an artist known and measured, one who had no more official recompenses to wish for, not even that which a



painter young to our country proposes to himself as the goal of his ambition. Two of these canvases (and I only mention those which come up in my memory) contained the Heilbuth of to-day in his germ; in "The Auto-da-fé" and "Pawnbroker's" was already revealed the taste for modern life, which seeks the poetry of every-day existence, and no longer goes down into the past.

This was already a scheme of a career, a first manner, which, in any other man, might have formed a final pathway; one without any grand lustre, but, after all, appreciable

and appreciated. Heilbuth would have gone on living in this line, below the rank of M^r Comte, the painter of the French Renaissance, a praiseworthy artist greatly in vogue at that time; continuing, for better for worse, and more or less influentially, the tradition of a school which belittles historical painting to the size of an easel-picture. It would be needful only to vary the subjects without bringing innovations into the style; to buy new costumes, a few pieces of furniture, and some clever accessories; and to read, at last, the history and memoirs of the day of doublets, and rebees, of skull-caps, and daggers, and vertugadins. But the artist was born active, vivacious, unquiet, and readily impressionable; once in a strange land, carried back to himself, in a comparative solitude where the evolution of his thoughts



might take place, and away from the costumeshop which has spoiled—especially in Germany—a whole school of richly endowed painters, Heilbuth was about to yield himself up to the impression of what was before his eyes, without forethought; and by the mere sincerity of this just and true impression to create a style which he would make his own without contradiction, which he would stamp with his own seal, and in which he has had quite a little school of followers. He shut up for good the “Lives of the Painters”



and the “Chronicles of Charles IX,” “Castiglione’s Courtier” and the “Novelle” of Bandello. He was about to seek for subjects, for a space of ten years, from matters of the open daylight, from what throbs in the sunshine within the frame of the superb horizons of the Roman Campagna, and within the stately monuments of modern Rome.

Those who did not know, about 1855, the artist who now presents the lofty stature, with the square strong form, of a landsknecht, whose gesture is firm and whose step is weighty, whose portrait has been painted in a masterly manner by Ricard,—who shows a wealth of vitality, who stamps his foot upon the ground and spends his health without accounting for it—would represent to themselves with difficulty that

Heilbuth, at that time, was balancing between a Gilbert and a Malfilatre, pale, thin, and sickly; tending to dream over the leaves of autumn, and looking fondly towards the Orient. He needed the sunshine of the South. He had lived at Rome; he returned thither.

It is almost incredible that in that city, where, from the epoch of Pius II, Martin V and Eugene IV, — now five centuries, — the artists have formed a thronging colony swept up from the four cardinal points, not a single one among them has had the idea of turning away his eyes from the Antique and the Renaissance and the conventional myths, for the purpose of casting a glance at that every-day life of the pontifical court which unrolled before

his eyes—a life picturesque and high-colored, representative in its forms and hues and lively contrasts, attractive in the highest degree from a psychologic point of view; a life, in fact, sufficiently various in its shapes to furnish an artist with food for his spirit of observation during a lifetime, by putting it together ingeniously with the various frames which enclose it and the backgrounds before which it passes.

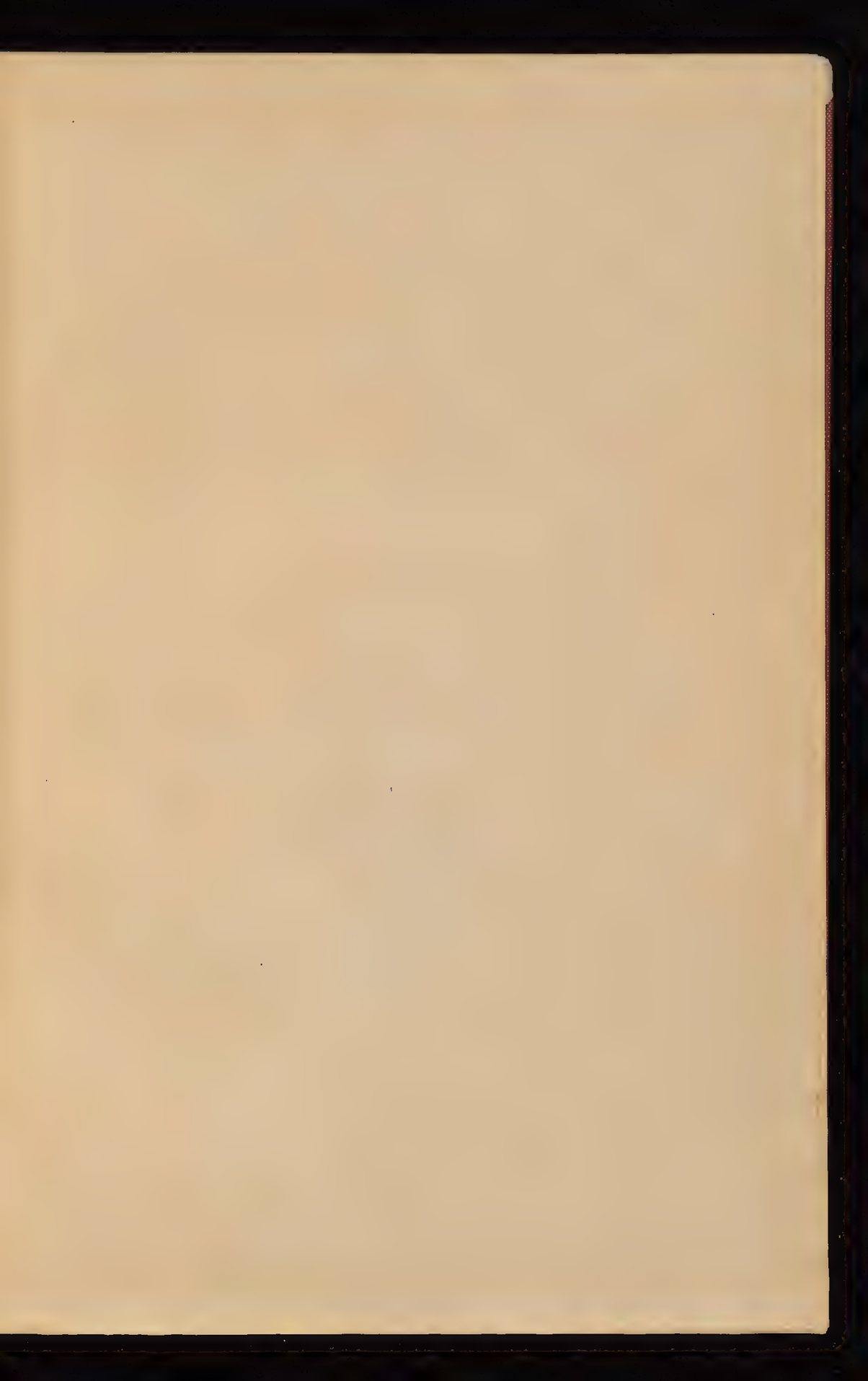
Léopold Robert and Schnetz had taken up the Roman Campagna; thirty years later, Heilbuth discovered the Vatican and became its authorized, and indeed its Laureate Painter. As if he had something truly prophetic in the choice he had decided upon, ten years after the day when he, for the first time in fact, painted such a subject as "The Cardinals Meeting each other on Monte-Pincio," all that world so full of color, so sonorous and lustrous, so strange in its shapes and types, and gestures, and accents, went back into the shadows of the Vatican, at the sight of the royal procession of the House of Savoy climbing up the Quirinal Hill. The Temporal Power was at an end. In such wise that the fifty or sixty canvases composing the Roman work of Heilbuth, will have had the singular fortune, strictly speaking and independently of the charm which they may exert and their intrinsic merit, to be historic documents, of incontestable value for all who shall attempt in future times to reconstruct Pontifical Rome before the days of Rome the Capital and United Italy.

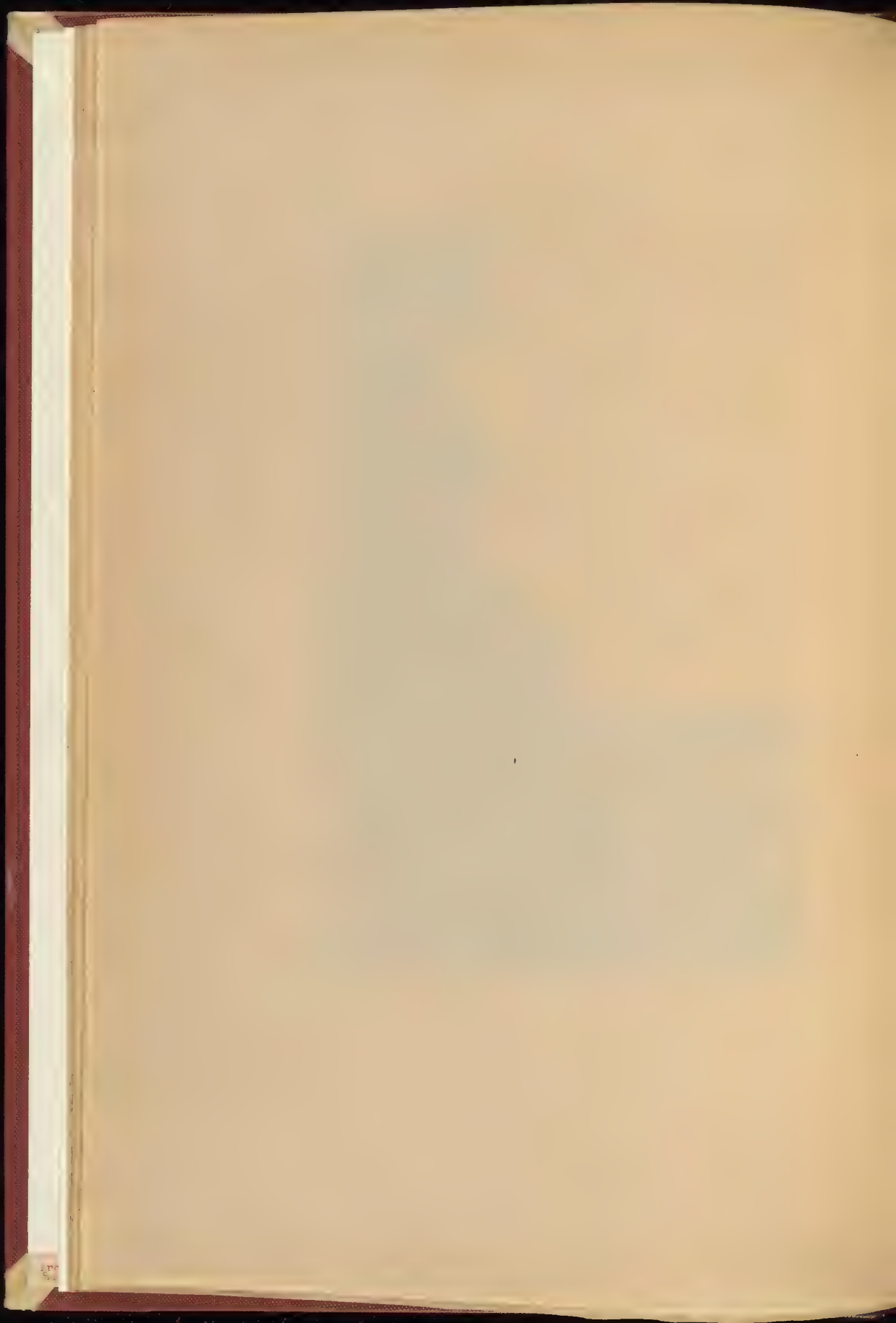
The greater number of the pictures of this period are celebrated. The critics of art found few happier anecdotic subjects for their pens. The men of letters were especially attracted; Taine saw in them something like a reflection of Stendahl; and, in truth, the painter unfolded through his whole career at Rome an incisive and ingenious wit, a fine observation, and lofty literary qualities. The success was so conspicuous, that the Vatican itself, which at first saw no more malice in the artistic work than in the literary work devoted to the same subject, would gladly have cried anathema, and have ranked the painter with the enemies

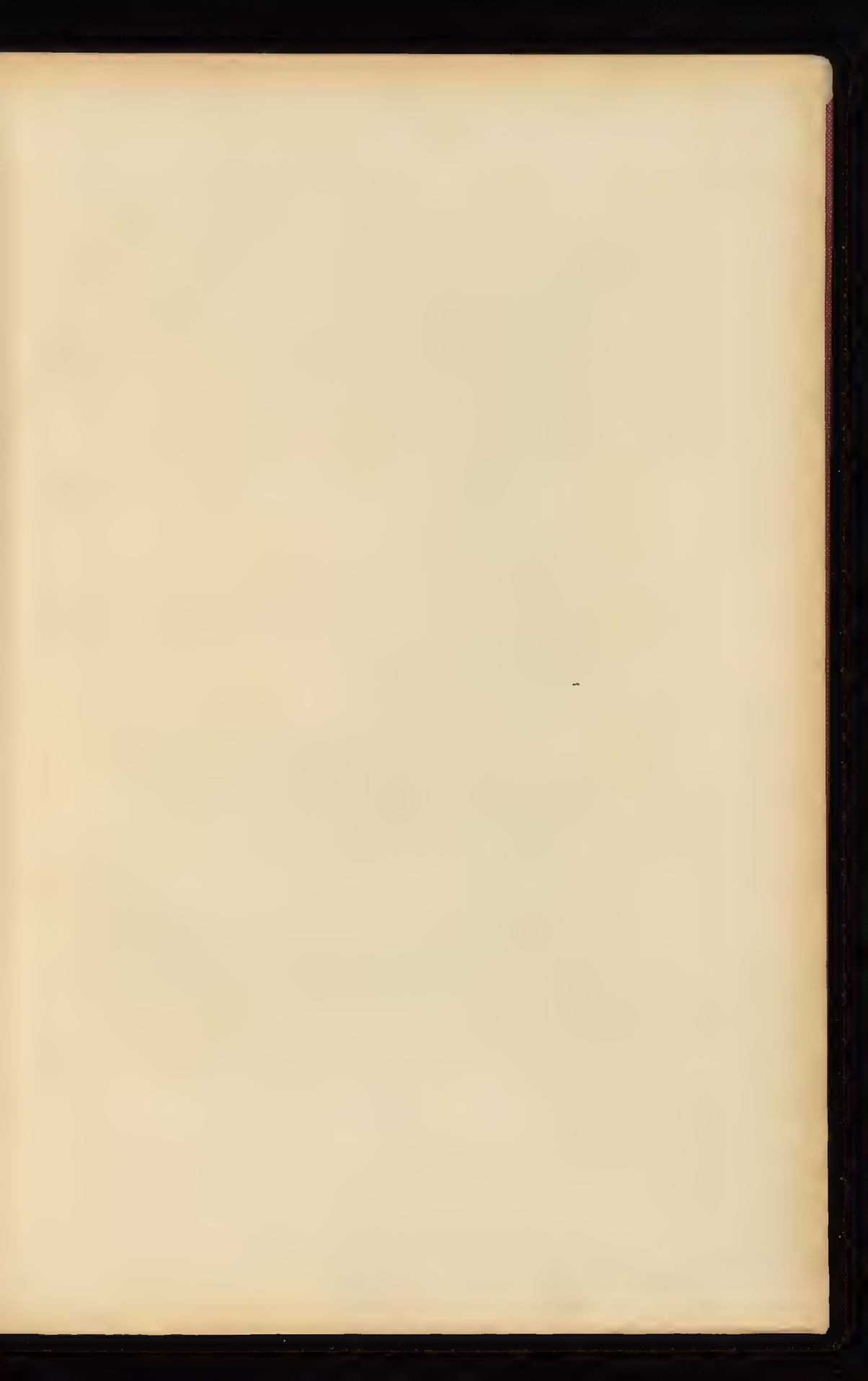




of the Holy Seat. The word pamphleteer was pronounced before these subjects; before these delightful canvases where some feeble old cardinal may be seen dragging his tottering steps along, bent by old age, covered with his crimson cloak as he presents his rearward view, and followed by a couple of servitors in braided liveries, beneath the last rays of the sun sinking behind the aqueducts of the Roman campagna, while the heavy chariot, garnished with orange-colored *fiocchi*, waits at the turn of the road for the prince of the church. Everything in these canvases seemed to hide a symbol; from the "Venial Sin," which bespoke the credulous ignorance of the Roman peasant, to the "Promenade of the Seminarists" and the "Excavation at Rome." After having painted the Temporal Power expiring, the artist was now held to be satirizing the



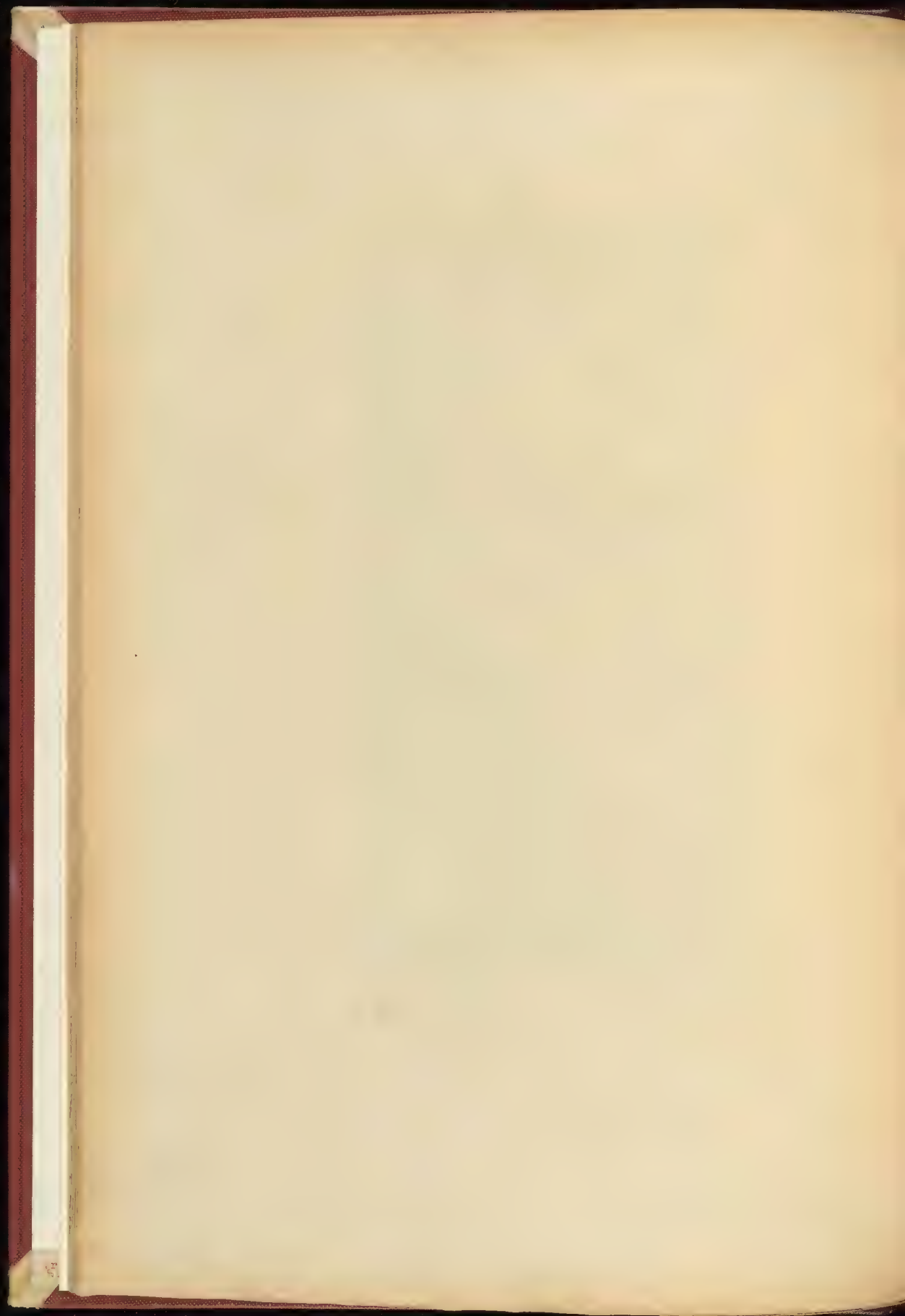


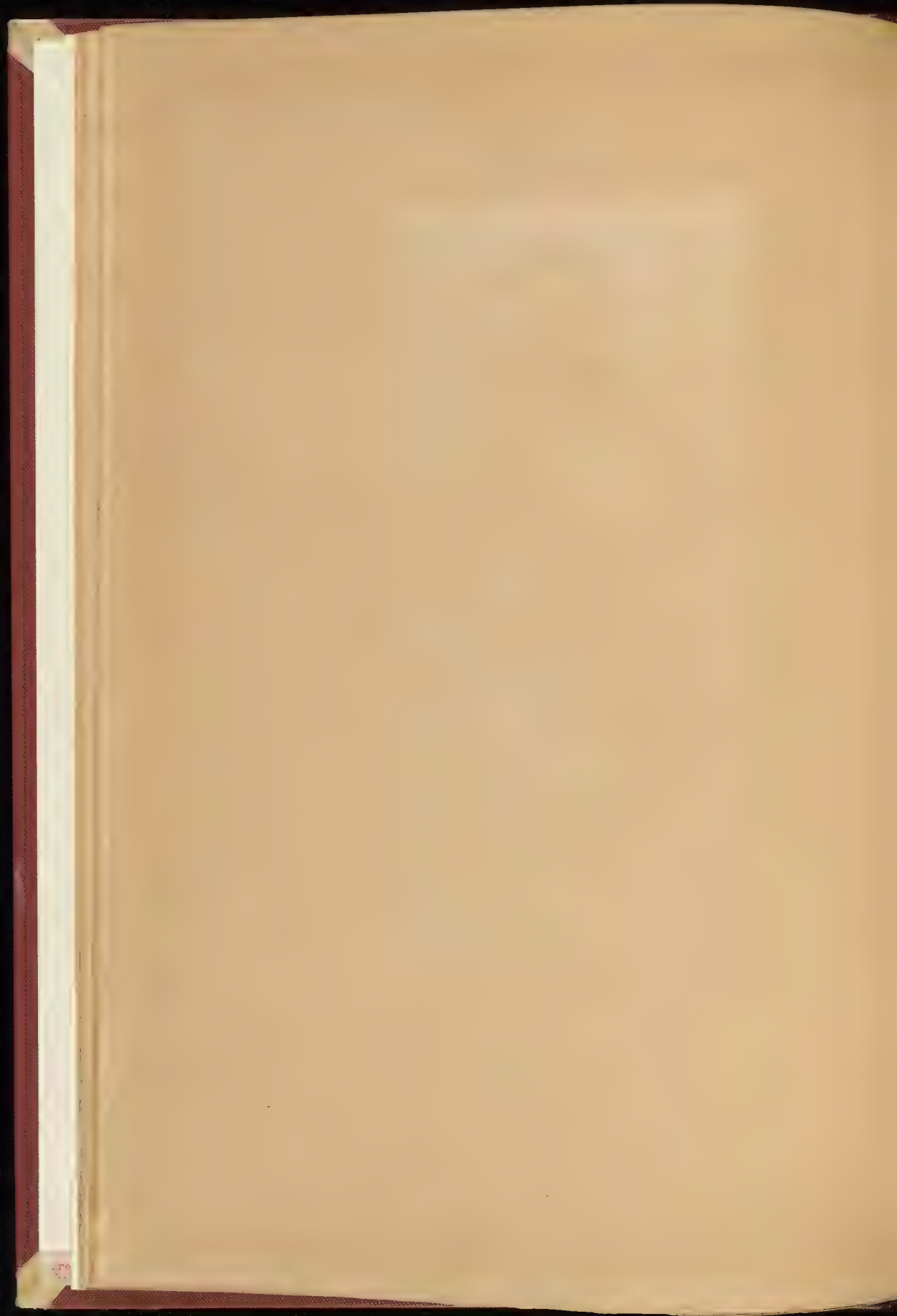




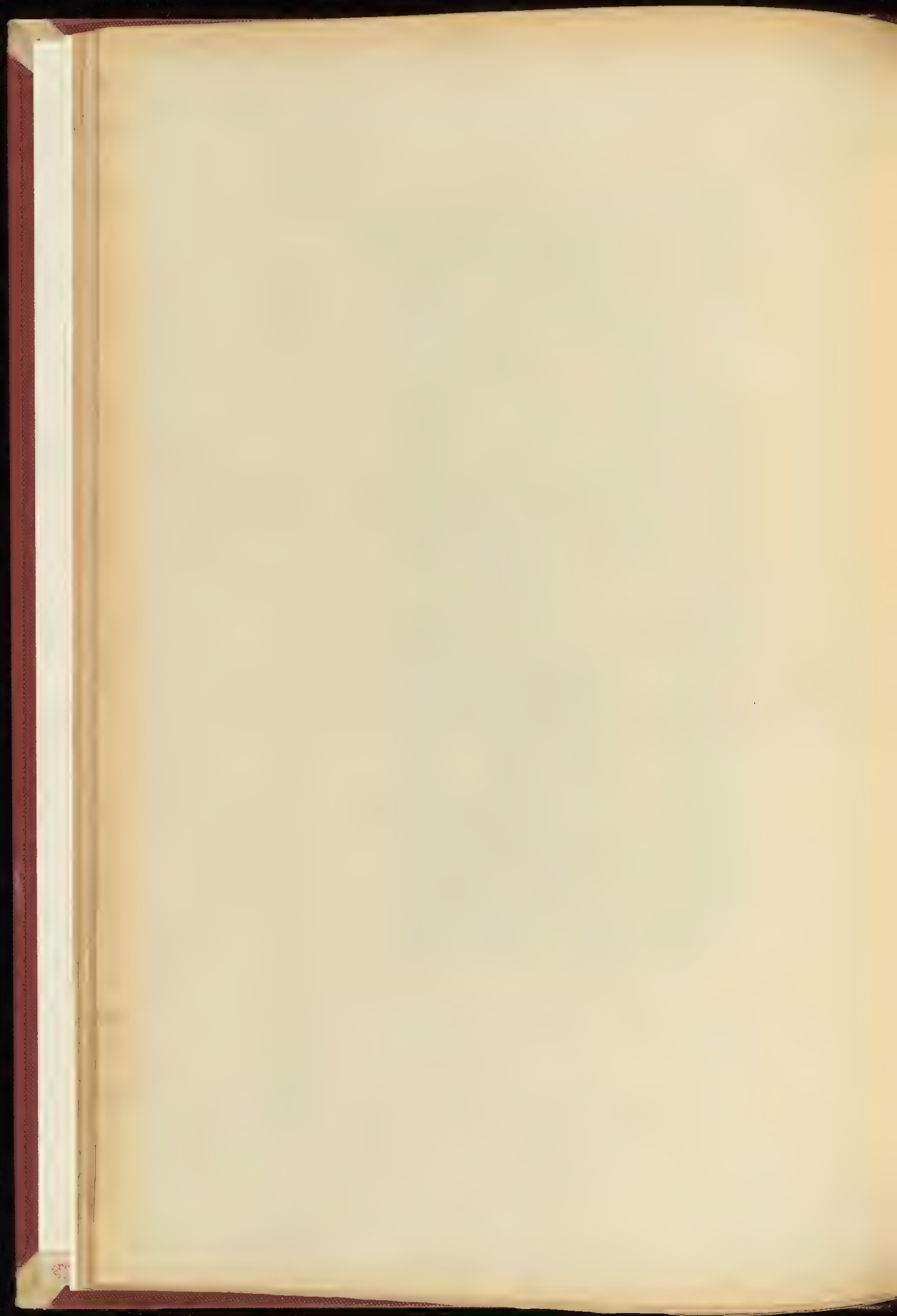












would-be science of the Roman archæologists in re-building cities which never existed. Need I say that the painter, all this while, neither recognized himself as scientist nor pamphleteer, as philosopher nor prophet, and went on looking at the scenes which he painted with all his might. The imagination of the onlookers did the rest; but it was none the less his glory to have aroused all these theories.



Heilbuth might have been lingering yet in this treatment of the life of the Vatican. I know plenty of picture-lovers, such as care more for the wit and intention in a picture than for the painting proper, who would fain have imprisoned him there for life. The picture-market, too—whose voice must ever be more or less attended to, and whose exactions must be submitted to, for it is the life-giver after all—still clamored after the Meetings on the Pincio, the Cardinals, and anecdotes analogous to those which had especially made the reputation of the artist, and had extended his name throughout the vast cosmopolitan world which makes of Rome its sole centre. But the artist was one of those characters who allow

no dictation, nor pathway, nor imperial mandate, to be imposed on them; and he was about to accomplish his third transformation. Ten more years, from 1872 to the present time, devoted to researches of quite a different character were to form his "third manner," a new style of subjects, in which he was to have a success which no one has contradicted. This, if not his final incarnation, is his last up to the present time.

From 1870 to 1872, Heilbuth was living in England. The adventures of the London season, the extraordinarily fine landscapes, the beauty of English women, the elegant incidents of life in the open air, the garden-parties, the games of croquet and lawn-tennis, the boating parties on the

Thames, the allurements of those river-sides with their splendid vegetation, whose powerful colors are maintained by the never-failing moisture; in all this there were elements for a new artistic career to any painter who, like him, was flexible and ever accessible to novelties. Teachable under the



hints of Nature, and above all unusually sensitive to feminine elegance and the distinction of good tone in gesture, form and movement; converted in fine by the poetry of womanhood harmoniously environed with the tasteful scenery of English fields, Heilbuth, in two years, discovered there once more a style which permitted him to excel. The British aristocracy, recognizing its features in these incidents of its every-day life, gave him so warm a greeting that those who, heretofore, had desired of him the subjects of his Roman period, now demanded subjects taken from this new object of his thought and vision. "The Rest after Croquet," in the collection of Sir Richard Wallace, the episodes of boating parties at Maiden-Head, where elegant figures are combined with charming landscape, were subjects which formed the pre-

lude of those he is now executing. His scenes on the shores of the Seine, on the banks at Neuilly, among the horizons of Bagatelle, or Bougival, and the terrace of Saint-Germain, were so many effects to which he only thought of applying, at a later day than his English sketches, the idea he was following out, of constituting himself the Watteau of real life; and of

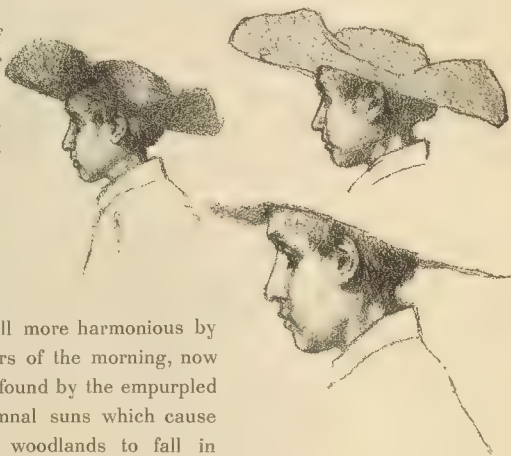
representing, after transforming them as he needs must in his artistic brain, the thousand accidents of that delightful world which passes without pressing its foot to the every-day pathway.

From this time living always in France, and become in the law a man of French nationality, as he had been a Frenchman at heart and by residence for almost thirty years, notwithstanding his numerous excursions and his sojourns at Rome, he is regarded to-day as the painter of Parisian elegances. He had executed paintings in water-color among the first of those who were not solely and specially aquarellists; his first painting in this kind is of the year 1864; the date was written on it at Villerville, and it represents the coast. In this material he found a scale of fresh and velvety colors which oil-painting does not yield, and fell in love with the method. Thenceforth he strewed abroad, by handfuls, a thousand little subjects, the delightful accidents



borrowed from Paris life, from the adventures of the *villeggiatura* in the environs, that inexhaustible source of pleasurable scenes. These things he has painted, now in water-color and now in oil; and among the latter the best-known are : " The Frogpond, " belonging to M. Edouard André,

"Fine Weather," — his last subject exhibited at the Paris Salon — "Le Bachot," "The Terrace of Saint-Germain," "Solitude," etc., etc., and how many others, to which we need not care to attach a special name, but all of which reflect some corner of French scenery, of the grace and poetry of the country surrounding Paris, with its character, its atmosphere, its envelope, its true system of colors, now rendered still more harmonious by the silvered vapors of the morning, now become more profound by the empurpled tone of the autumnal suns which cause the spoils of the woodlands to fall in masses over the roads.



Heilbuth took an active part in the foundation of the Society of French Aquarellists. The success of this reunion has been decided; some have even thought it exaggerated, and for my own part I am not far from being of their opinion; for ingenuity and freedom of hand are only very secondary qualities in art. And then, — excepting some sincere artists, who care little for the choice of method when the business is to render that which they have felt and that with which they wish to affect us — the need to strike the public attention every hour and to surprise it at every new exhibition became the fixed idea of the greater number. I said at the beginning of this little essay that there is a share of truth in almost all the modern ideas — a truth which it is our business to separate and to apply.

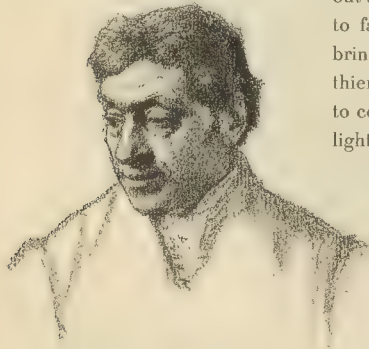


It may be that the Aquarellists will only live the life of the roses; the aquarelles, maugre some gloomy prophecies, are immortal, when they deserve it, as I may summon in evidence those of Bonnington to be; I have them in my eye, and I do not speak of the permanence of materials. But it is indisputable, for any good judge, any dilettante, or art-critic, who does not allow himself to be dragged about by the nine day's wonders of the exhibitions, that those painters who have remained faithful to the material of oil-painting, have gained something by the advance of the water-color method. The bright, crisp, piquant scale of color, so cheaply obtained — the lustre, the youthfulness, the liveliness of that ably-arranged nosegay which a quickly-brushed water-color constitutes, are beginning their mission of dragging

out those who have allowed themselves to fall into the blackingpot; they are bringing them up to effects of a healthier nature, obtained at less expense, to color-harmonies invented in a scale lighter yet more vibrating.

I dare not promise that circumstances may not cause us to announce, in some few years from now, a new transformation in Heilbuth's talent; however, the evolution, this last time, may very well be the final one. He

no longer undertakes to delineate an epoch, a period, a sect, whose aspects, however various they may be, are still numbered. His field of action henceforth is that of life itself, life fertile, inexhaustible and ever new; life,

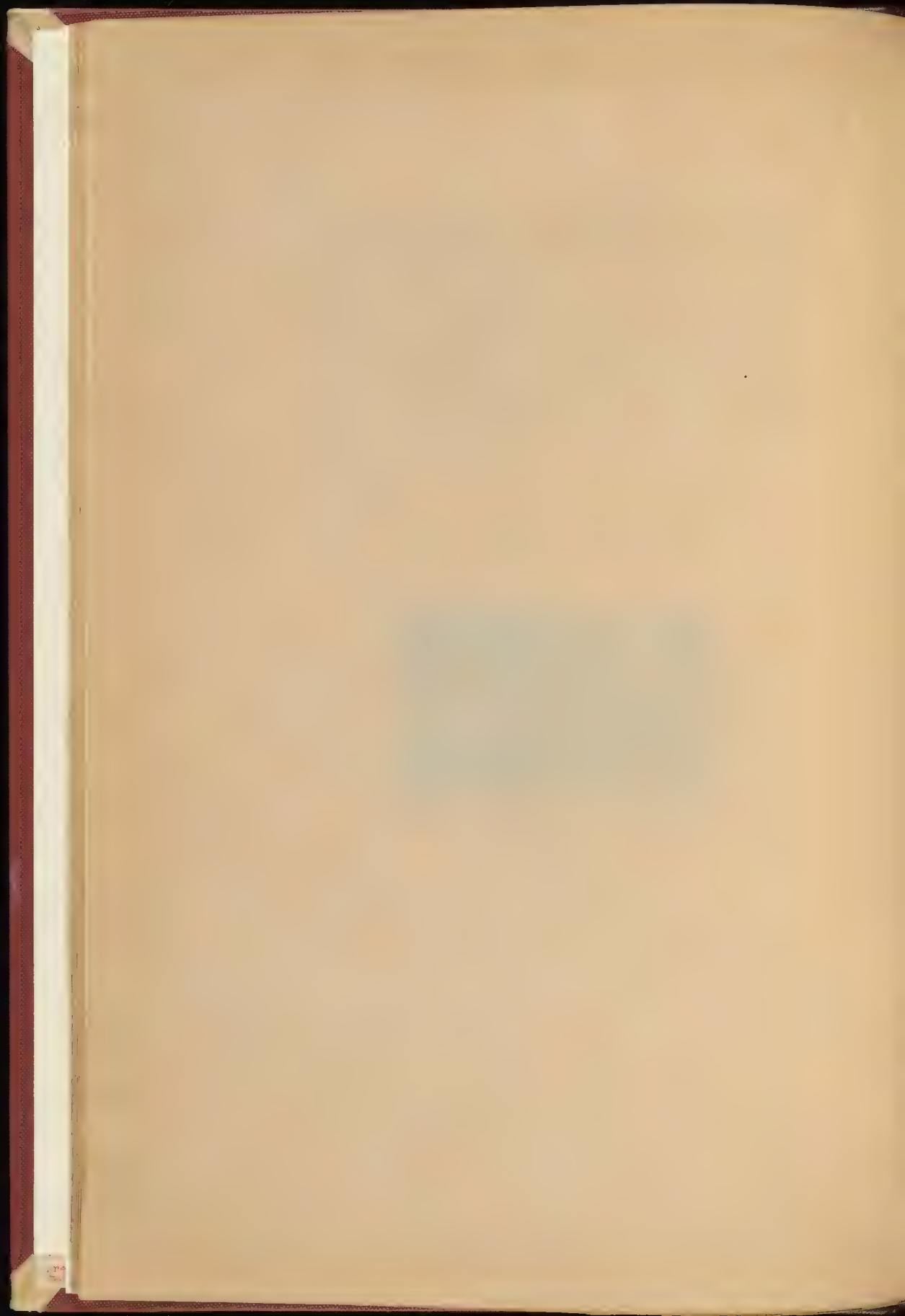


changing itself from hour to hour, so far as concerns its form and restless fashions, ambitious only of never attaching them-selves; life, whose aspects in the sunshine are never the same, any more than the cloud of yesterday is the same as the cloud of to-morrow.

The artist has grasped the secret of truth; his toils are crowned with success; to his work he applies a deep passion; his existence is in the contemplation of his idea, and everything which does not belong to that idea is powerless to interest him. These are conditions which bespeak a fruitful future for an epoch of life when the laboring hand is certain, when it possesses the long-sought equilibrium; and when it remains at the service of a teeming invention, of a true eye, and of an industry which never gets in its own way.

CHARLES YRIARTE.

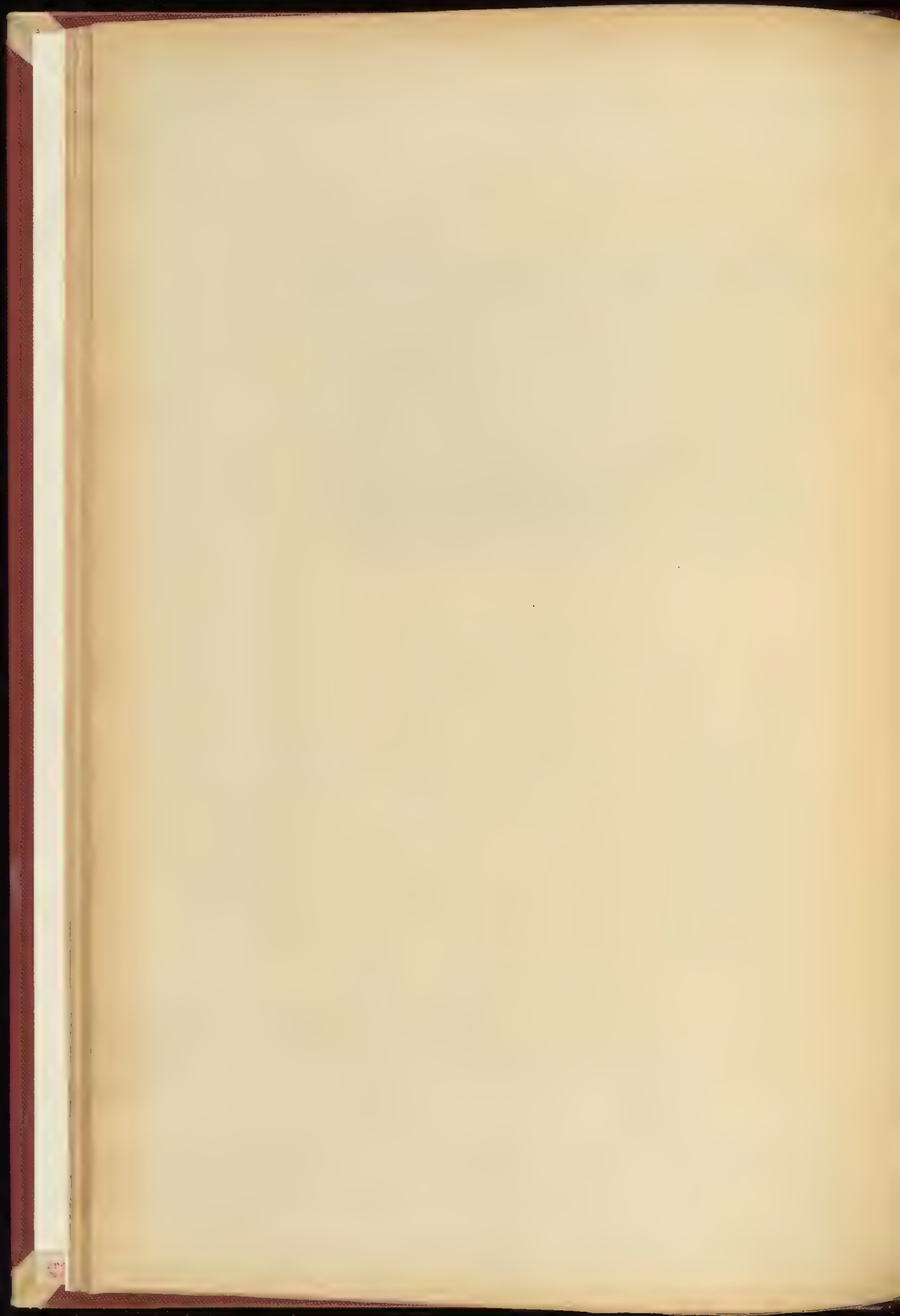




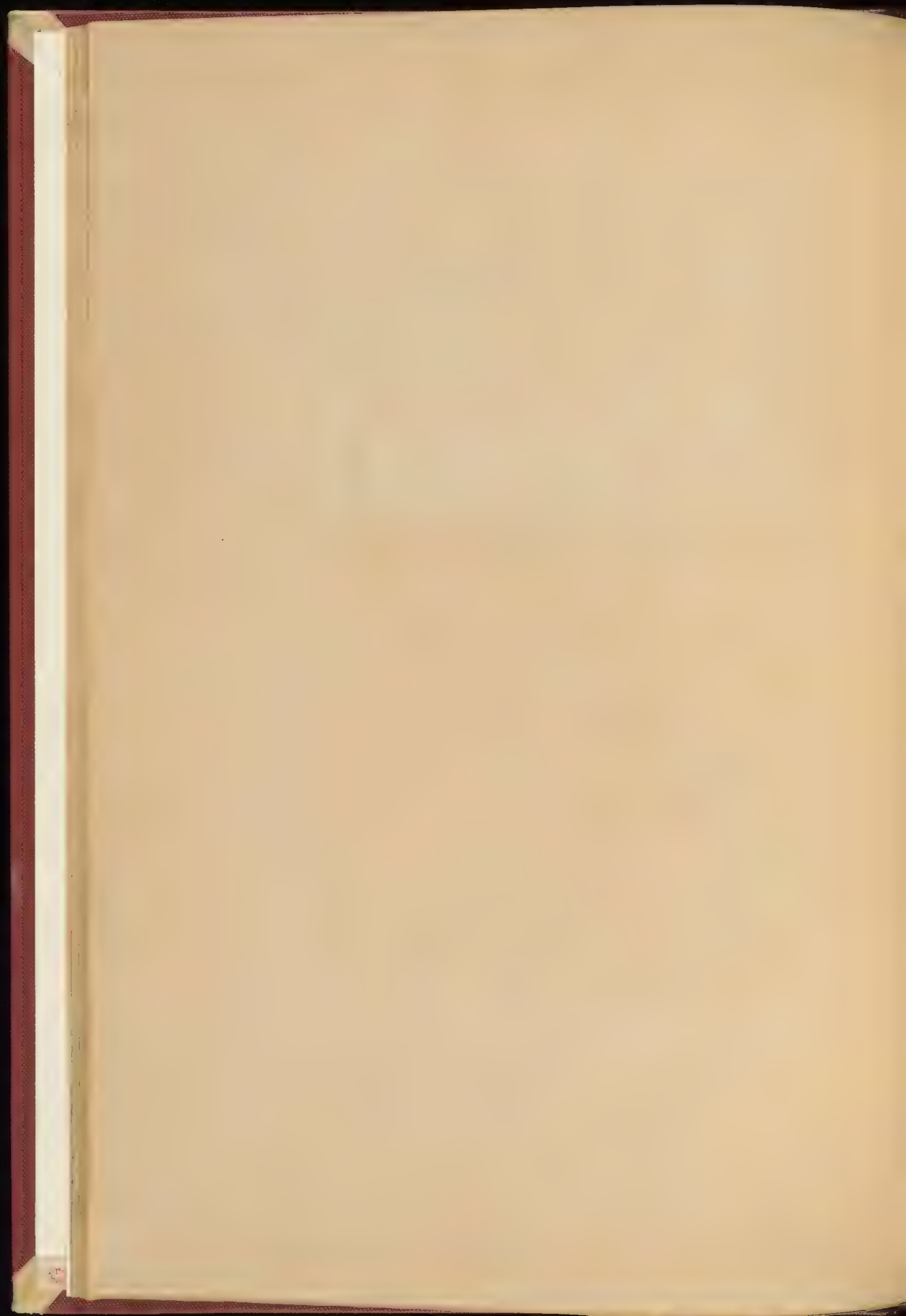














GEORGES VIBERT



Let me remind the reader that, on the 15th of february 1882, the *Society of French Aquarellists* opened its fourth annual Exhibition, in a gallery worthy of a Museum; and its President, M. Georges Vibert, received at the hands of the Minister of Fine Arts, the rosette of Officer of the Legion of Honor. That was the crowning moment of a notion conceived by one man, and now advanced to the importance of an institution. To-day water-color painting is a dominion in the dominion of art.

It is pleasant to me, in the face of this successful fact, to carry back my eyes to the period of fifteen years ago, and see, over so great a distance—over fifteen years of such hard travelling! —the embryo from which was to grow the group of French water-color

painters. Indeed it is instructive, and at the same time amusing, to go back on our steps. There is room for so many things to happen between the points of departure and a point of arrival, whether we refer to the advance of a man or to the development of something due to his suggestion.

I shall then, for the moment, proceed to make up a history, a history executed with costumes of fantasy, and in which, instead of politics, there shall be anecdotes — the whole composing a page that will have more than one right to be attractive. Heaven help me, I am quite aware that Art,



though it takes up a deal of room in people's thoughts at present, is a much slenderer interest in the purview of certain master-minds; and that I am about to expose myself in a grotesque attitude in attributing, as I shall, a major importance to the acts and *gestæ* of a handful of men, to the errandries of a

round-table, and finally to the dear successes of an Academy. But there are never any grand effects without their petty causes, and it behooves me now to prove it.

So then, in 1867 or 1868, five painters, drawn together by a common sympathy, inhabited a kind of oasis lost in the verdure of Montmorency. It was not a palace; and it was rather more than a cottage. By its form, this refuge assimilated with the chalet; and by the materials of its construction it belonged among the citified houses. A kind of park stretched around the habitation, recognized by the nightingales, which commenced to tune their orchestra when evening arrived, and the moon began to roll up with the slowness of a theatrical curtain.

From a great way off people could hear the gay sallies of repartee, and accents heated with enthusiasm; and among the talk, that rosary of

laughter which young people, such as those here assembled, tell off without counting.

Here were Georges Vibert, Louis Leloir, Worms, Berne-Bellecour, and the lamented Zamacois. Only five as they were, they already formed a party in the politics of painting, a group of the opposition like the Five in the French Legislative Body.

They were not of modern views, these youths; quite to the contrary, it was from the customs of vanished ages that

they asked for inspiration, making up for the lack of the emotions so long buried, by the savor of the picturesque inseparable from the primitive manners they reconstructed.



And from this taste resulted the fact that their house very often had the aspect of a hall of fairyland, with the glitter, the spangles and the sheen of the dresses which were seen piled up on every side, with living models



putting them on or relinquishing them; these theatric beings animated the studio, made processions down the steps leading to the garden, or were glimpsed and disappeared in the turn of an alley.

All the Italian pantomime passed, repassed, in the persons of these Scaramouches, these Leanders, these Matamoras, these Zerbinettas. The humps of felt sombreros were shadowed with dancing feathers, and swords clattered like old

iron upon shapely legs moulded in tightly-stretched hose. In another quarter, another tableau, another mandolin — scenes from the Spanish comedy, as humorous as a chapter of *Le Sage*; and episodes as piquant as a scenario of Goldoni's.

All the inhabitants of the phalanstery worked with fixed object, running

in pursuit of fame and of fortune, the latter of whom appeared deeply occupied in some other region, for up to that time no one had seen a wheel of her car.

Notwithstanding her neglect, the circle showed their wits in perpetual illumination, and a laudable evenness of temper—except when they undertook the criticism of old masters or a discussion of the art—principle; these battles began about the epoch of the soup, at dinner, and never finished

before the curfew-bell, — which rang thereabout at a small hour of the morning.

This life, borrowed from Rabelais' Abbey of Thélème, this existence of an Epicurian of the mind, threatened to last for ever, when the arrival of a foreign artist and the exhibition of his works in France put to risk the whole æconomy.

That is to say, Fortuny was revealed by the Messrs. Goupil.

It is easy to imagine what a shaking of bones

was produced among the Five by the Spanish painter.

During the day-time, they would march off in a body to the collection of paintings, of aquarelles and of etchings pertaining to the young master. In the evening, all would bring together the day's impressions. The analysis of qualities, the comparison of admirations, were the evening's task of these young ruminants.

More than all the rest, the aquarelles pricked the curiosity of the Montmorency colorists. Every member dreamed of them at night, and, in the morning, leaped out of bed to discuss them, with debates endless



and inexhaustible, only broken by the silences of discouragement. Strange habits began to be observed in the club. Vibert would measure off the alleys of the garden and soliloquize; and everybody knows how much wit this artist can introduce in a soliloquy. Louis Leloir became a secret character, hiding himself to detect new combination and *motivi*. Worms feverishly picked the strings of a kind of mandolin which may have had the soul of music, but no longer had the body. Zamacoïs disembowelled the technical books treating of art. Berne-Bellecour calculated the angle of a special and particular shot of his pistol — to be the prelude of a composition which was

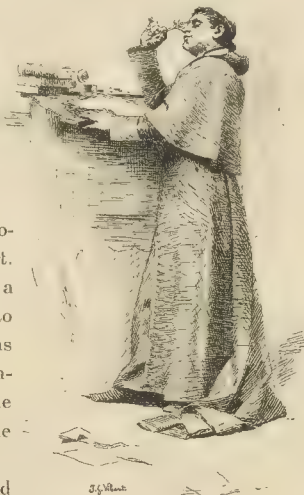
to make him famous, under the title of "The Cannon-shot."

What suffered

from this unequal state of things was the profession of painting. The canvas "laid in," remained in what print-collectors call a "state." The hired models, pining in inaction, had no resource but to weed the gravel and water the flower-bands. Some unusual condition was evident in the atmosphere, threatening to burst in a thunder-clap when least expected. It was under the craniums that the storm was brewing!

One evening, an evening that decided everything, water-color painting was once more the burden of conversation. The Five assailed this topic with the firmness of a decision fixed beyond recall.

"Let us experiment!" they cried in perfect union.



"Once! Twice!" cried five voices.

"Three times! Let us experiment in water-color!"

Twelve hours later, the stokers of the railway beheld a procession formed of our comrades, who clambered into the same car. Once arrived at Paris, they entered the shop of a color-merchant. "Little saucers!" was their cry, "little saucers! — besides paper, brushes, colors, and all that is needful to paint in water-color." Alas, the most needful thing in this art is the ability to execute it, and this the merchant resolutely declined to sell.

The Five immediately went back. They were in anxious mood, they overturned the foot-passengers who obstructed the pavement, they were fol-



lowed by a stream of vociferations, and in this style they climbed again into the train which returned them to Montmorency at the end of half an hour. Their transit had been through the whirlpools! Impossible chimeras had been formed in the brains of the new Jasons. Water-color painting, its glories and its success, had vacillated among their attacks and their *ripostas*. They made one think of Don Quichotte, the chevalier of a fair Dulcinea del Toboso.

In a state of fever, the Five placed themselves at table, without any appetite. They were impatient to see the cloth withdrawn, that they might plunge into the shadowy troubles of their labor. The salad was forgotten, the dessert was countermanded, and the coffee was drank without lifting the thumb from the cup-handle. While this was going on, Vibert rolled his eyes

with dangerous expression, Leloir commenced a distracted cigarette, Worms plunged his chin into his fist, Berne-Bellecour, to give himself a calm condition, chanted a war-song, and Zamacoïs disappeared. He slunk away clandestinely to ask for inspiration from the "pale satellite," which was slowly rising, and whose pearly tones he could glimpse through the leafy branches trembling in the breeze.

At length, the Five are installed round the table. A swinging lamp, reinforced with candles, sheds cataracts of light over the sheets of paper. A model, costumed as a dragoon of the First Empire, attitudinizes solemnly. The silence of a monastery, only disturbed by the humming of the night-flies, covers this fantastic-looking conspiracy.

As in a game of dominos, where the players hide with their hand the dice awarded to them by their treacherous luck, our artists keep to themselves, endeavoring to conceal both their ineptitude, and the secrets which they propose

to put to use. Everything is an obstacle in their path. The paper either blots or soaks the color, the paints run, and damnable stains introduce themselves. The Five never leave the saddle, but continue the pursuit in desperation, swallowing the oath which betray their various perils, and revealing their mistakes merely by the flourishes with their fists which are now and then thrown off into the Night!

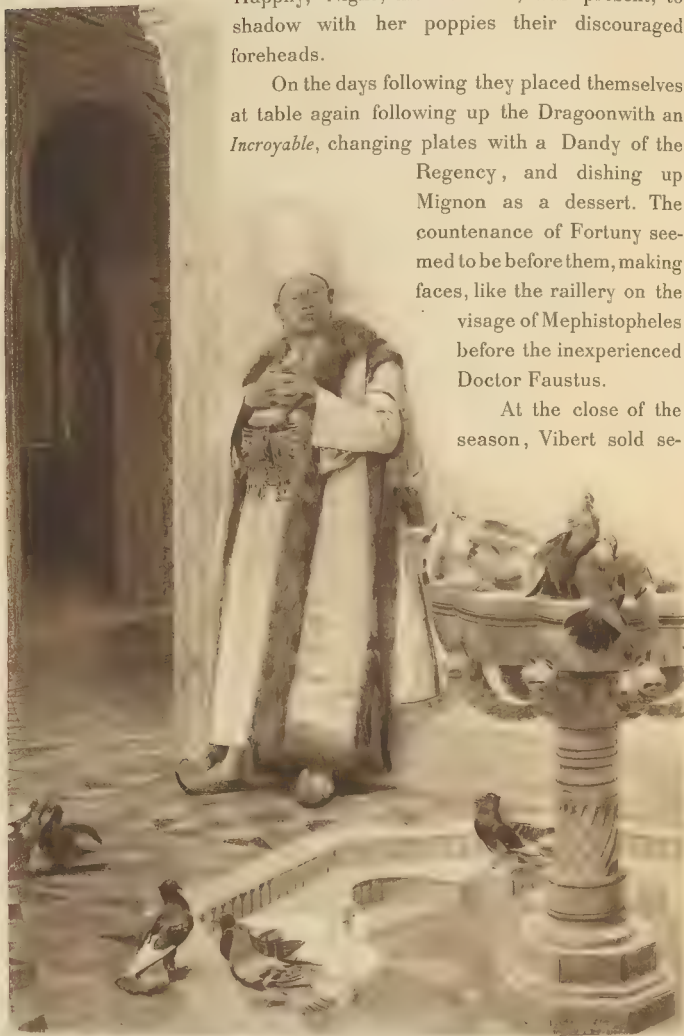
The end of the sitting came with the dismay of defeat, when, one after other, the water-color apprentices showed their result around the circle.



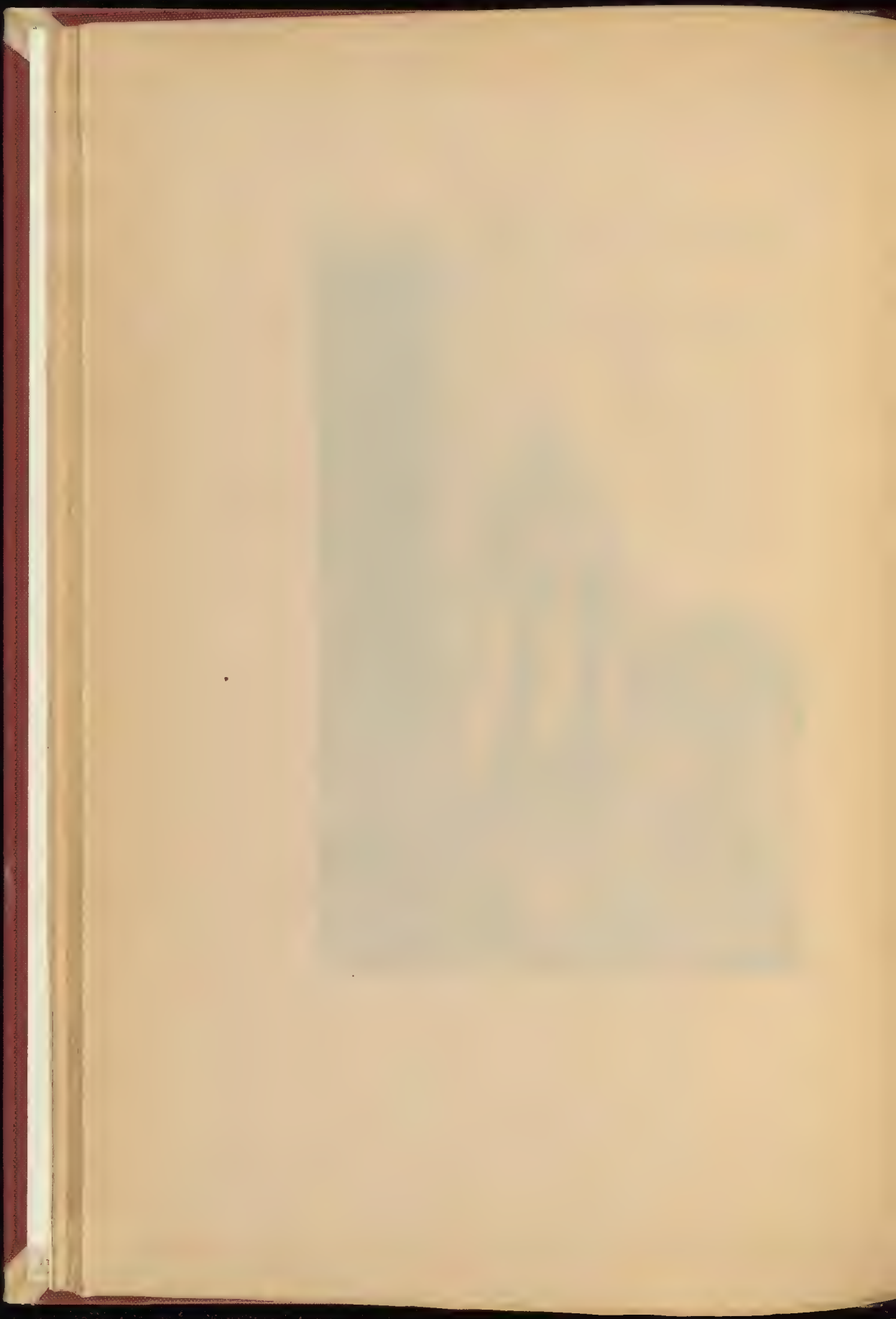
Happily, Night, the consoler, was present, to shadow with her poppies their discouraged foreheads.

On the days following they placed themselves at table again following up the Dragoon with an *Incroyable*, changing plates with a Dandy of the Regency, and dishing up Mignon as a dessert. The countenance of Fortuny seemed to be before them, making faces, like the raillery on the visage of Mephistopheles before the inexperienced Doctor Faustus.

At the close of the season, Vibert sold se-





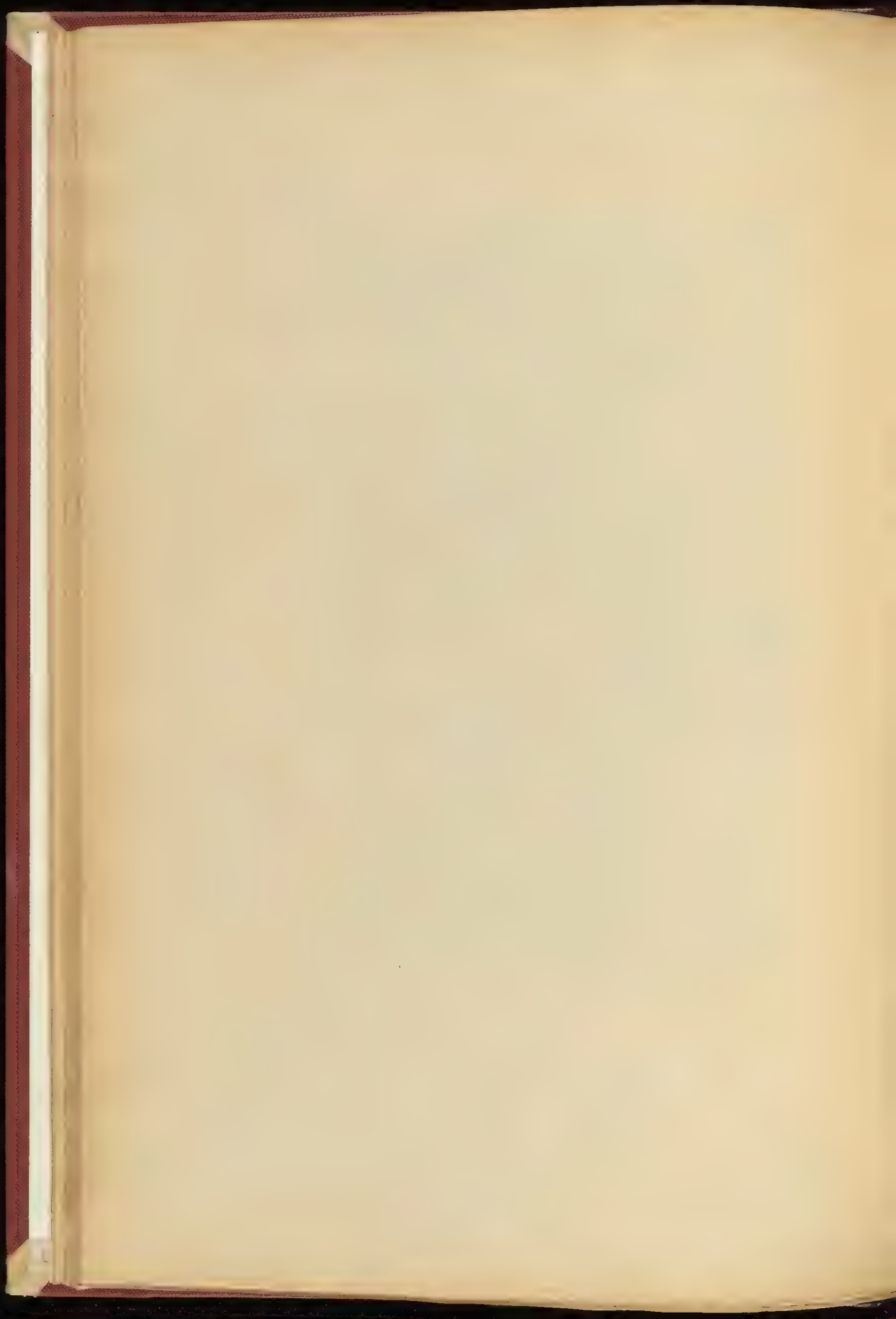


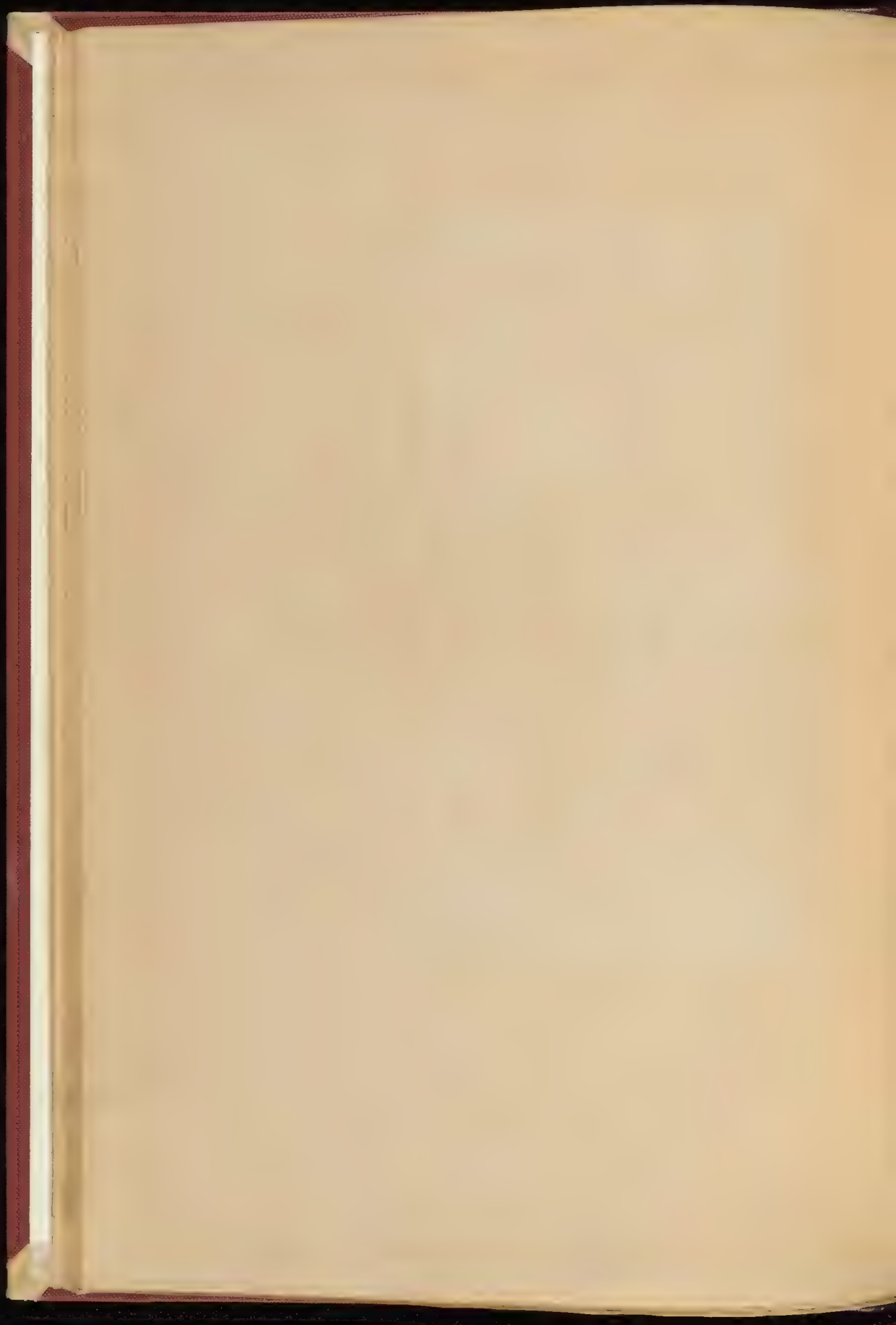


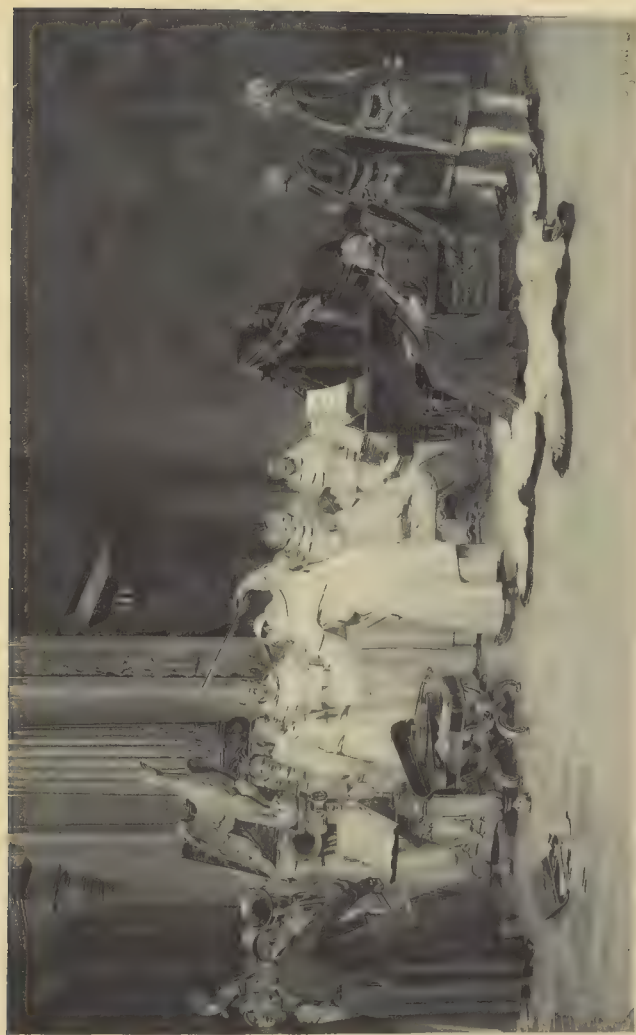


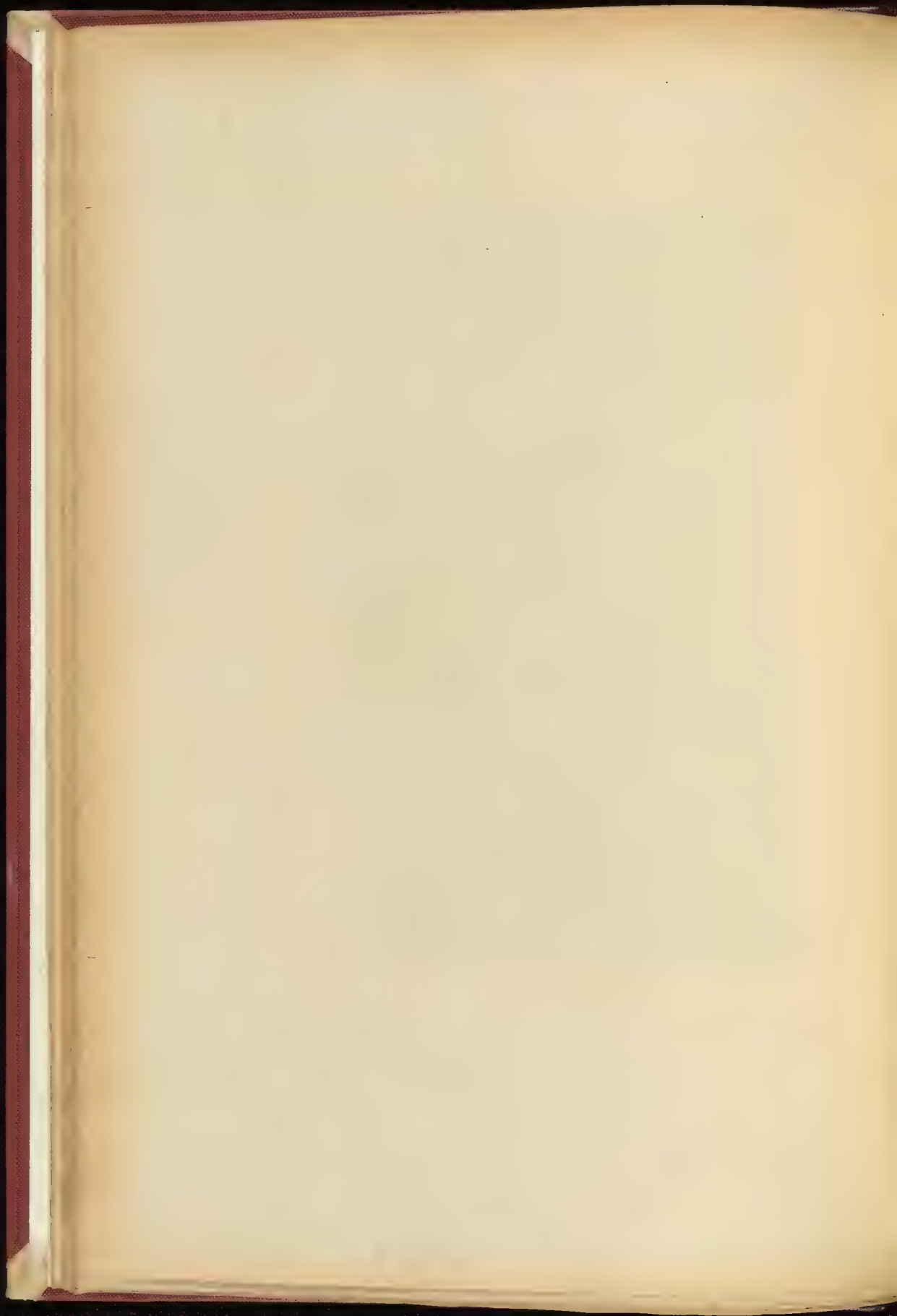












venteen water-colors to the Messrs. Goupil, for the pittance of two hundred and fifty francs.

Such was the point of departure for the Society of French Aquarellists.

The Five, and those whom they have since attached to them, have invented nothing. They have tried, in all simplicity, to reanimate Water-Color Art, which for long years has fallen into discredit, in forgetfulness of the delightful works of Fragonard, of Jannay, of Moreau the younger, in the eighteenth century; of the pages of flowers and natural history executed by Redouté or Van Spaendonck, not to speak of the masterpieces of Bonington and Géricault under the Empire and the Restoration.

At a later period, Paul Delaroche, Devéria, T. Johannot, Charlet, Eugène Delacroix, Meissonier, Decamps, Isabey, Eugène Lami, Baron, Daumier, have painted in water-colors. Yet the union of all these illustrious names was unable to destroy the prejudice which condemned Aquarelle to



banishment. The Jury of the Paris Salon swept off the most exquisite compositions and magical bits of technic into the outside corridors of the Palace of Industry, — a place where the infrequent visitors stared from above at the marble whiteness of the statuary arranged beneath the gallery, and at the omnipresent nudity of line and plaster walls. As Plato chased the poets out of his republic, so we have seen Gustave Moreau, that marvellous dreamer, pilloried in the ostracism of this modern Ghetto!

Now that I have sung the epic of Aquarelle according to each participating warrior the place due to his courage, I may bid farewell to the Five,

taking no further care than for Vibert, who forms the object of this study, and who, I am bound to say at the risk of alarming his modesty, has been the grand motor of the Society of French Aquarellists.

Just now I exhibited Vibert immersed in the difficulties of the commencement, working very hard and obtaining precarious results, but goaded by the desire of vanquishing that invincible thing, Difficulty. He struggled, he persevered, he broke himself in to the manipulation to which his hand and



his thoughts have now accustomed themselves, and in 1869, he was ready with two aquarelles for the exhibition. They were, "Harlequin at the Lawyer's," and "The Clothes Merchant." In 1870, he sent "Gulliver, strongly tied down and covered by the guns of the Lilliputians;" and at the same time, thinking that the myrmidons of office were perhaps watching the awakening of the lost artist, he sent two other water-colors, "The Serenade" and "Coffee-Shop." The attempt was striking, and the novelty pleased. In those subjects which only comprised two personages, or at most three, Vibert showed a freedom of arrangement, an excessive freshness of handling, and a command of the brush which were like himself, and like himself alone. Possibly Delécluze, the famous critic of early days, would have had to rewrite a sentence that has been often quoted :

"It has been so entirely agreed that the water-color artist was to be a colorless being, to the very limits of insipidity, that if some audacious painter were to take it into his head to add gum to the water, to make the colors richer, he would be treated like a man who cheats at cards."

We see what a public prejudice Vibert had to overcome in addition to his countless obstacles: a public prejudice while admitted no other resources but paints in pure water, and condemned any addition or modification which might correct the character of colors too neutral in themselves.

It must be noted that up to the present time the greater number of

water-color painters have often shown a deficiency of vigor, relief and brilliant schemes of color. Over-brightness was never a famous fault of water-paints, and patrons, forgetting the freedoms which the eighteenth-century artists allowed themselves, interdict the employment of body-color.

But little reck we of the road when the goal is reached. What are the secrets of the kitchen to us if the dinner succeeds? I believe the war declared on this subject to be puerile, and that it has no more right or reason than that which was opened against the painter who rediscovered the use of the palette-knife.

Vibert, who dearly loves his art, in his warm desire to perfect it perceived quickly how inferior were the methods of execution prescribed to him by French tradition and all his efforts have been directed, if not to the total triumph over this inferiority of the vehicle, at least to overcoming it as far as possible.

In the first place he betook himself to studying the manufacture of the paper used by water-color artists, and to noting systematically the difference between the sorts that are offered for this employ. This is of no slender importance, for frequently a water-color painting fairly begun, and begun with the utmost promise, is found to run a risk, or even be lost, at the finishing minute, because the paper contained some defect — because it was too absorbent, perhaps, and the touches went on enlarging like a spot of oil.

For with water-color the painter is forever in a state of alarm. You cannot retouch, or change, scrape out, or begin again, as you do in oil-color. You ought to make a drawing of your subject, whether a single figure or a crowded composition, and afterwards hit the exact force of color. Aquarelle admits no afterthoughts, to which oil-painting is so



accustomed. From the first touch you must work fast, accurately and well. It is a kind of graceful impromptu, taken at a leap, and aiming at



brio rather than at profundity, delineating the usages and the tastes of a period without any pedantry or philosophy. The spectator should read your page at the first glance, as you read a book without seeking what is between the lines.

After the paper, the paints, already much modernized and changed, became the object of Vibert's scrutiny, and drew him, on to a whole train of scientific attainments, including the properties of divers accessory matters, such as gums and glues. To reach his ends he caused

to be set up on his premises a regular laboratory, such as would be the joy of a Boussingault and the amazement of a Dumas.

He should be seen in his demoniac brew-house, following up the search after some combination, or the solution of some mixture. In this closet, the painter disappears and only the scientist enters. Bent over his furnaces, where



the glass flasks and retorts are grumbling, he pursues attentively the experiment in order. A long apron falls down to his feet, a velvet cap protects his head, and before his face is a transparent mask, which would preserve it in case of an explosion. On a shelf are vials, test tubes and bottles; within reach, mortars with their pestles; in the air a fringe of

plants hanging to dry. The friends of Vibert have given him the name of the Chemist.

All these consideration may seem puerile, but to me they appear indispensable. This book now in hand, we are not writing it for to-day, we are writing it for to-morrow too, and all of us — friends who have gathered around to support a common idea, — we feel convinced that the results which so far have been a little subject to contradiction, will become truths for our grandchildren. We all believe that water-color painting is in the path of safety, and that it is recommencing with a set of never-published formulæ.

If Vibert had accomplished nothing but what I have just indicated, what a priceless service he would have rendered to those who are to come after him and after the artists he has collected to his standard! Out of scattered strength, he has made the *fasces*: out of individualities he has made a corporation, that is to say a power. When Dettaille, Eugène Lambert and Louis Leloir came to discuss with Vibert, in 1878, the possibility of forming themselves into a Society, and of giving water-color Art the position which was refused it by the yearly Salon, that was



the germ. Any trifle might have caused an abortion; everything depended on the furrow where the germ was cast. In the opinion of each member of the present Society of French Aquarellists, the inauguration obtained is due to Vibert, who drew up the set of rules and had the tact to get them agreed to. Thanks to him, the difficulties inherent in every new creation were levelled, all disturbances of wounded self-esteem were avoided, and moreover, — what marked the profoundest ability — this society of young men was formed with the support of veterans, grown gray under their laurels. Vibert asked from such as Isabey, from Eugène Lami, from Henri Baron, their aid and the lustre of their renown. From the first

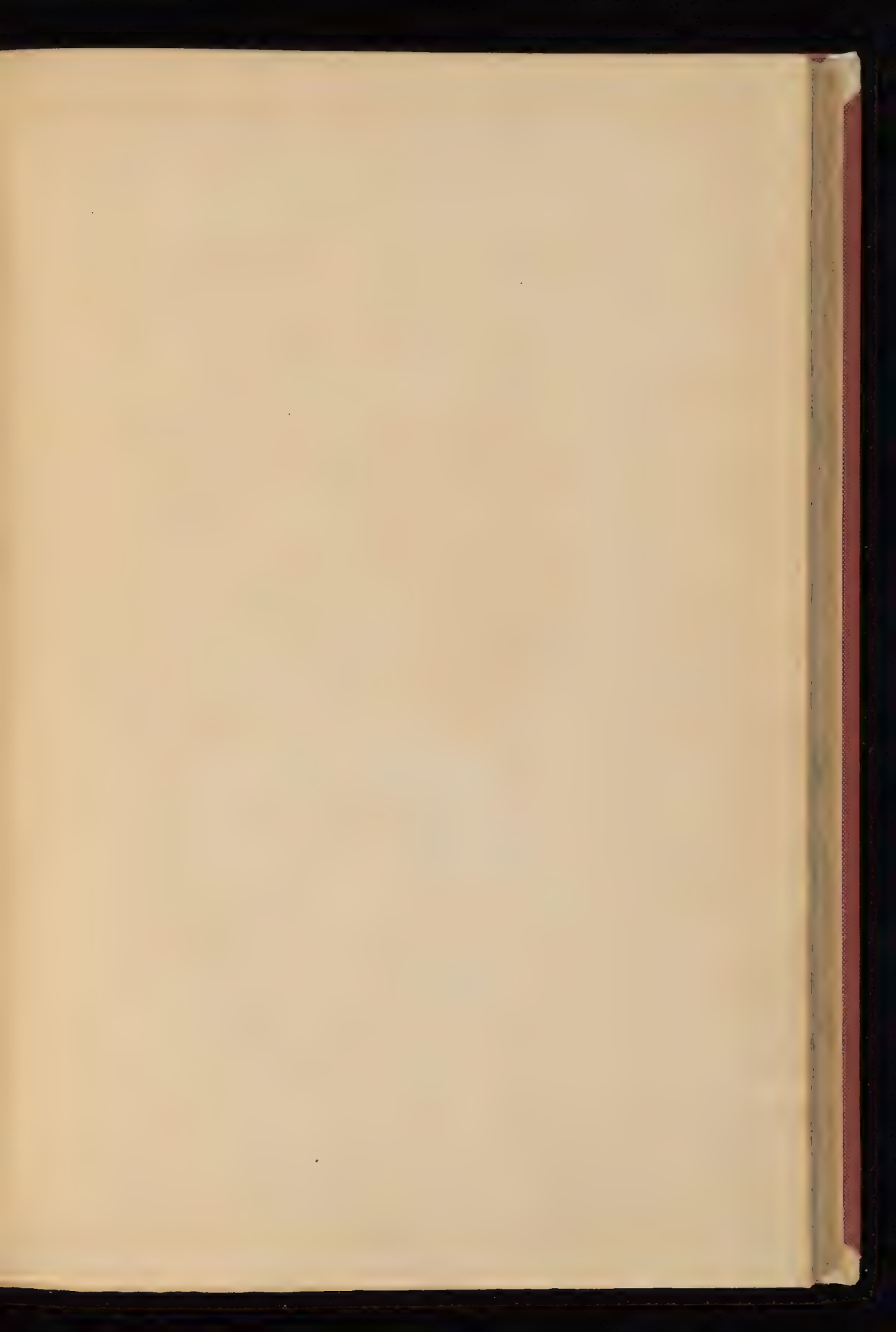
stroke, as was evident in 1879, at its opening exhibition, the Society was in a condition to march.

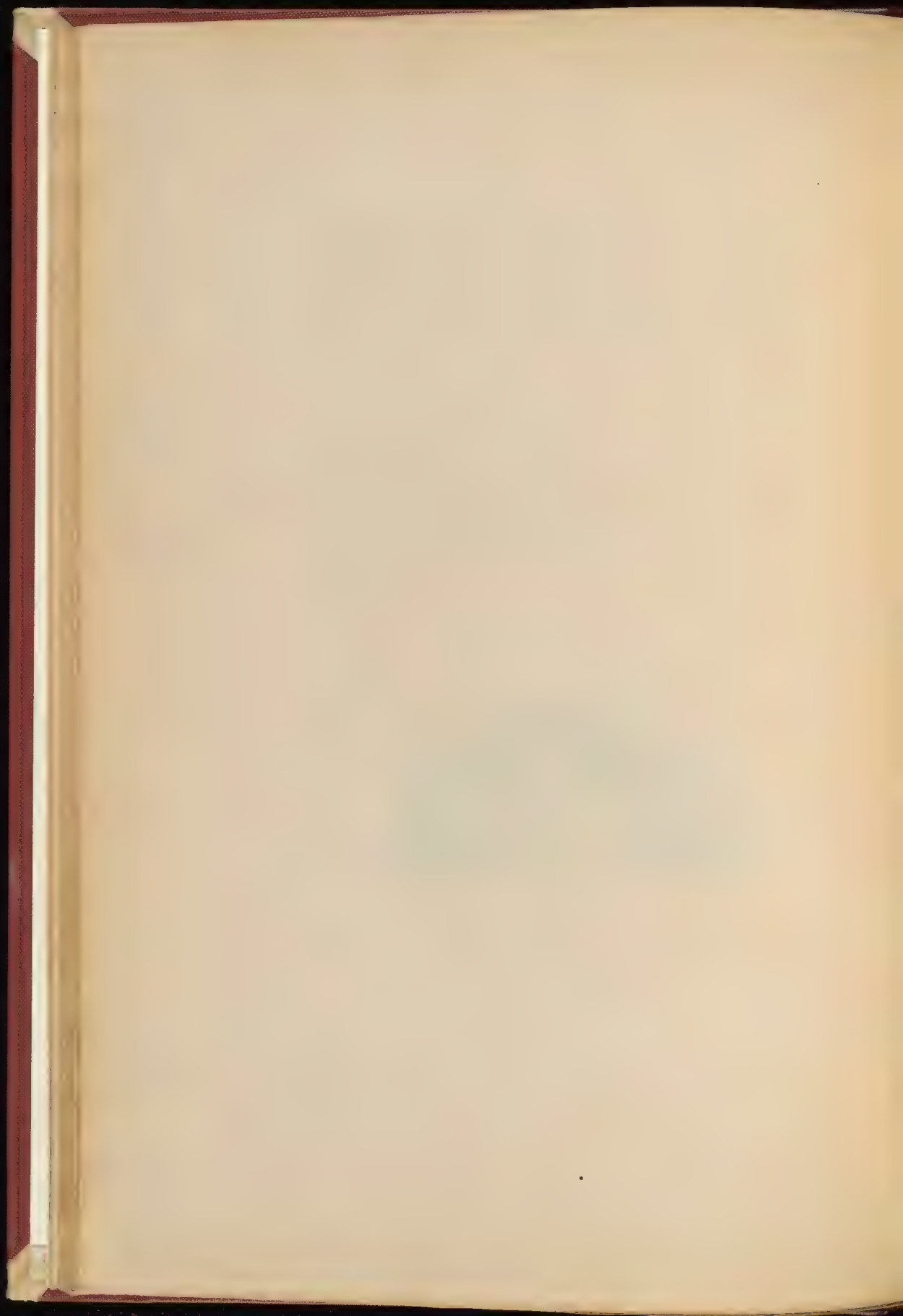
I have shown at sufficient length how water-color has been restored in this France of ours, so full of life. I have indicated the broad share taken by Vibert in this concurrence; and in making these statements I have sacrificed necessarily Vibert and his work to the work of all. However, justice obliges me to say a few words, which will be the summing up of universal opinion about this painter.

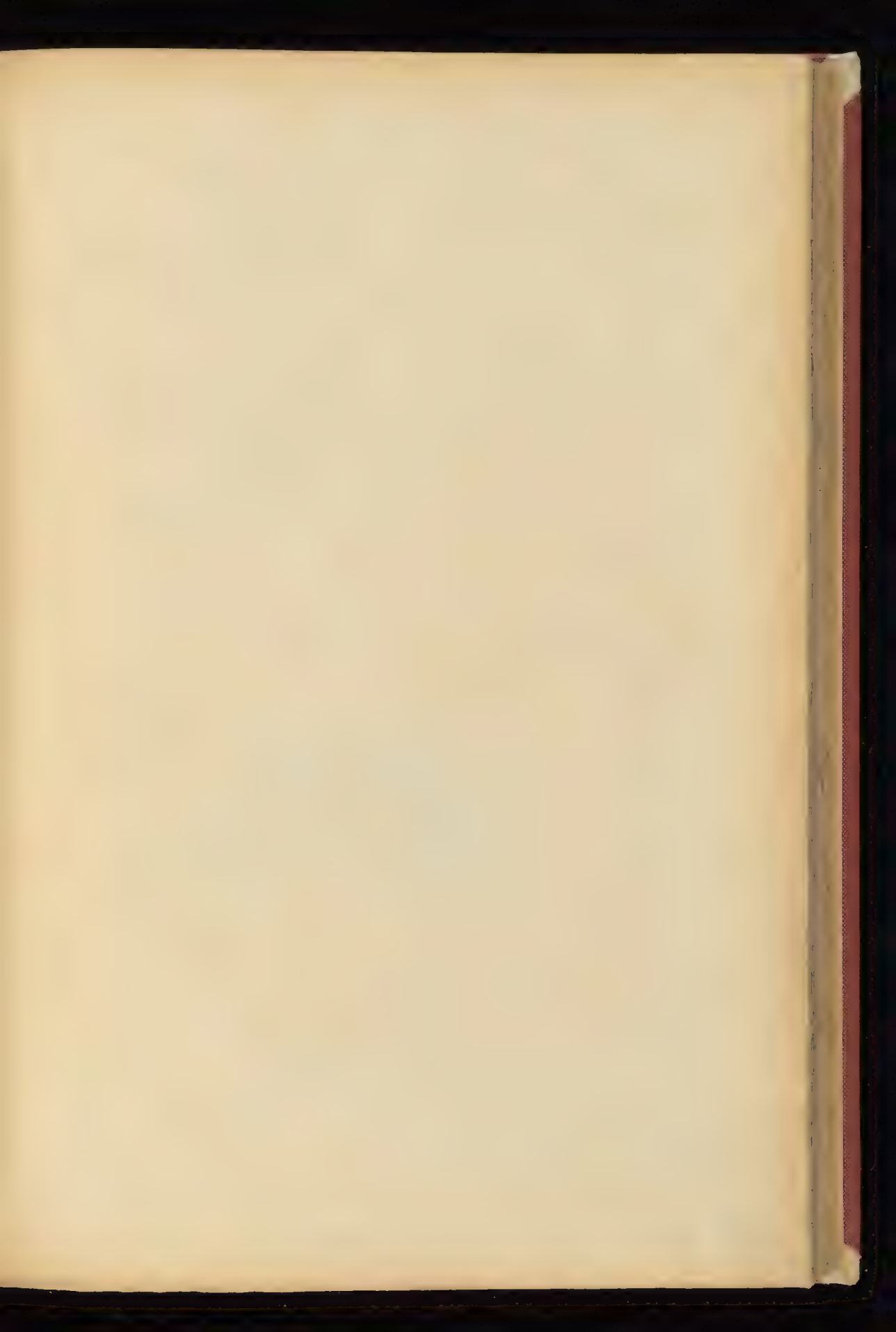
In one word, this is a bit of nature, as we justly define certain characters; a bit of nature, complex enough to have become a favorite with the crowd. Vibert in the first place ploughed himself a furrow in which he meant to sow; it is a series of unexpected circumstances which have led him out of it, giving him, as in exchange for the accomplishment of his first efforts, a whole harvest of applause, notoriety, honors — not to speak of fortune. Who knows if he may not sometimes repentantly look back, from his present distance, towards the glory which used to appear dawning out of the purple horizons!

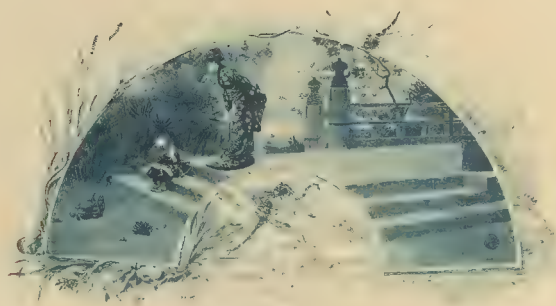
EUGÈNE MONTROSIER



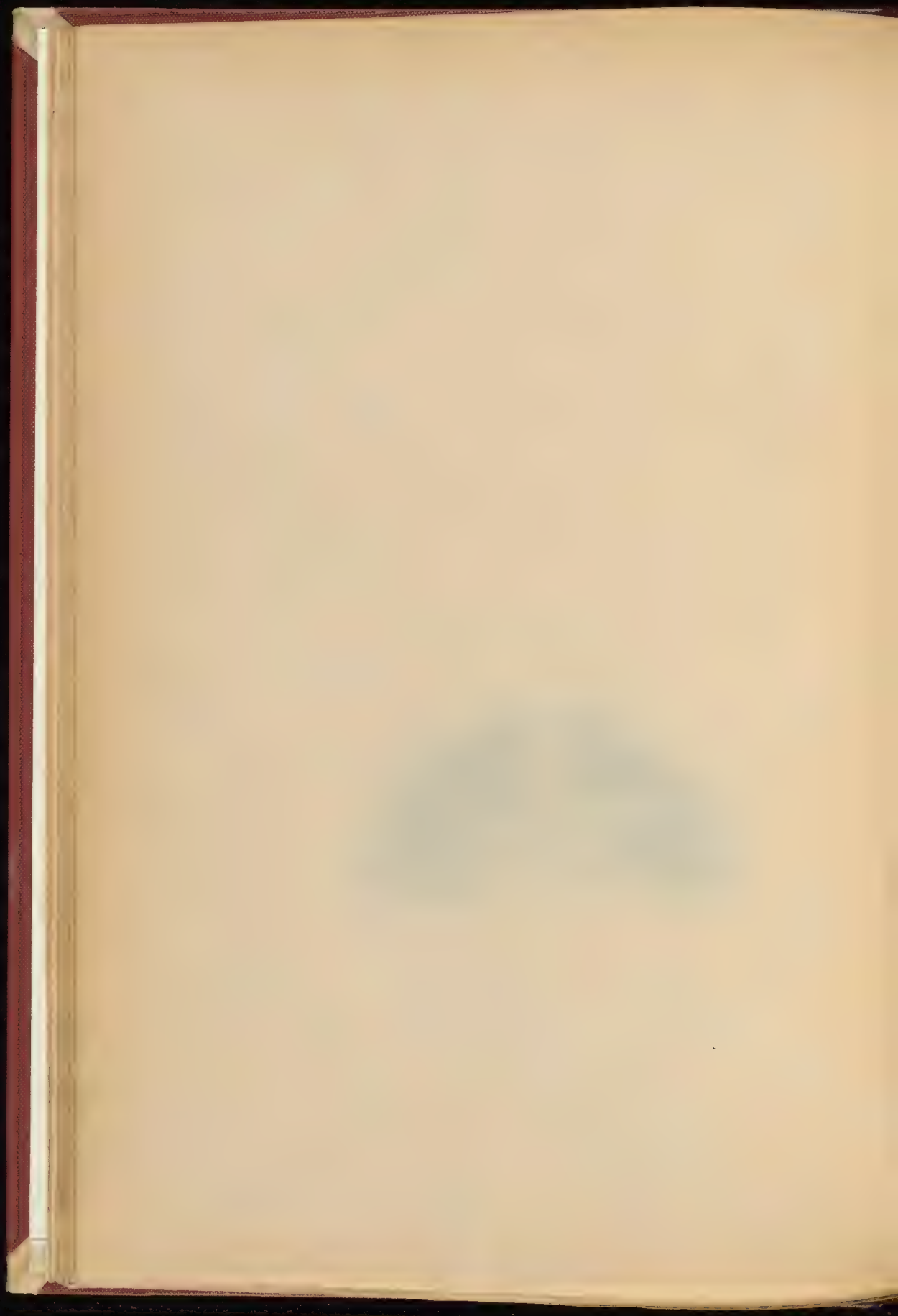




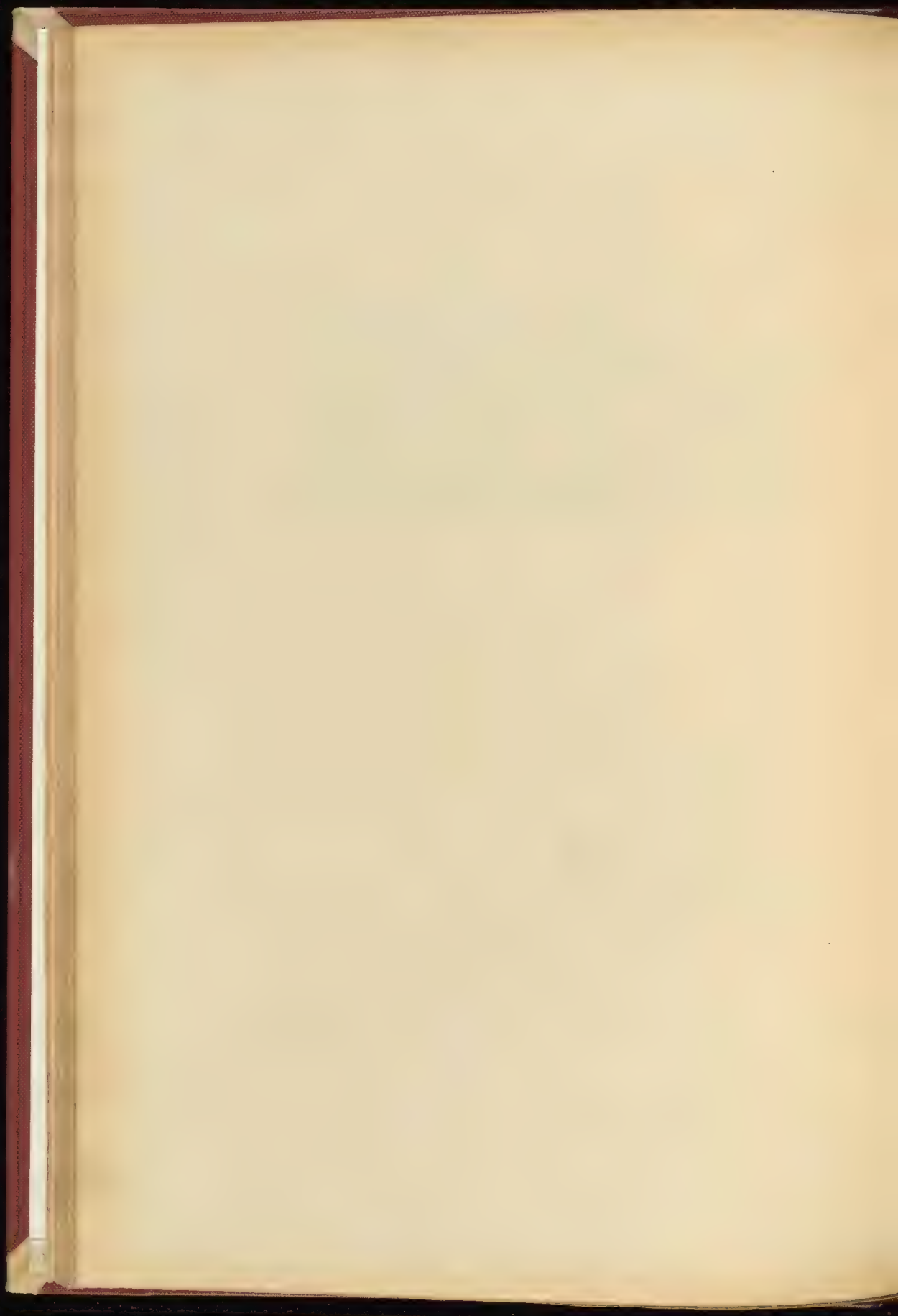


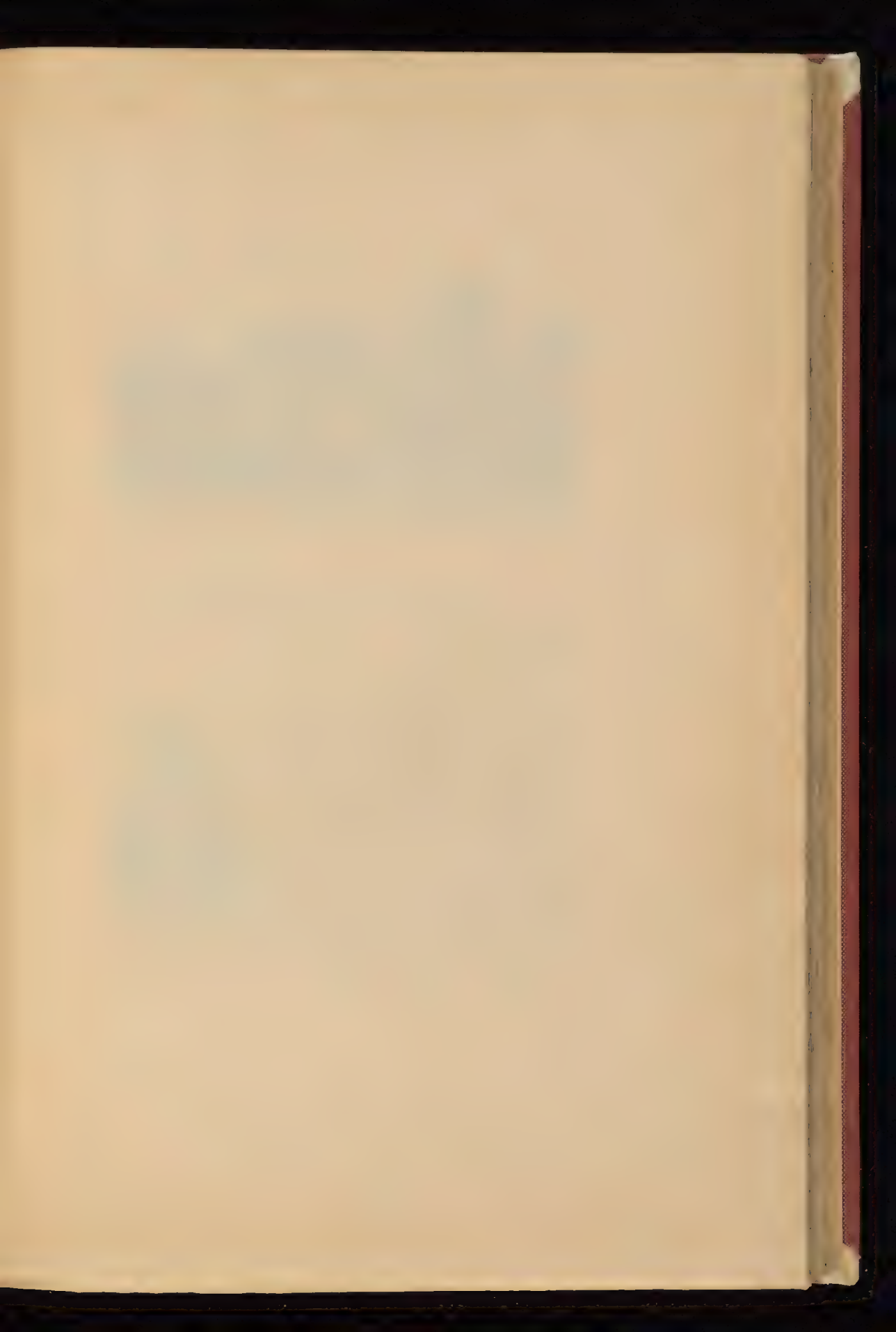


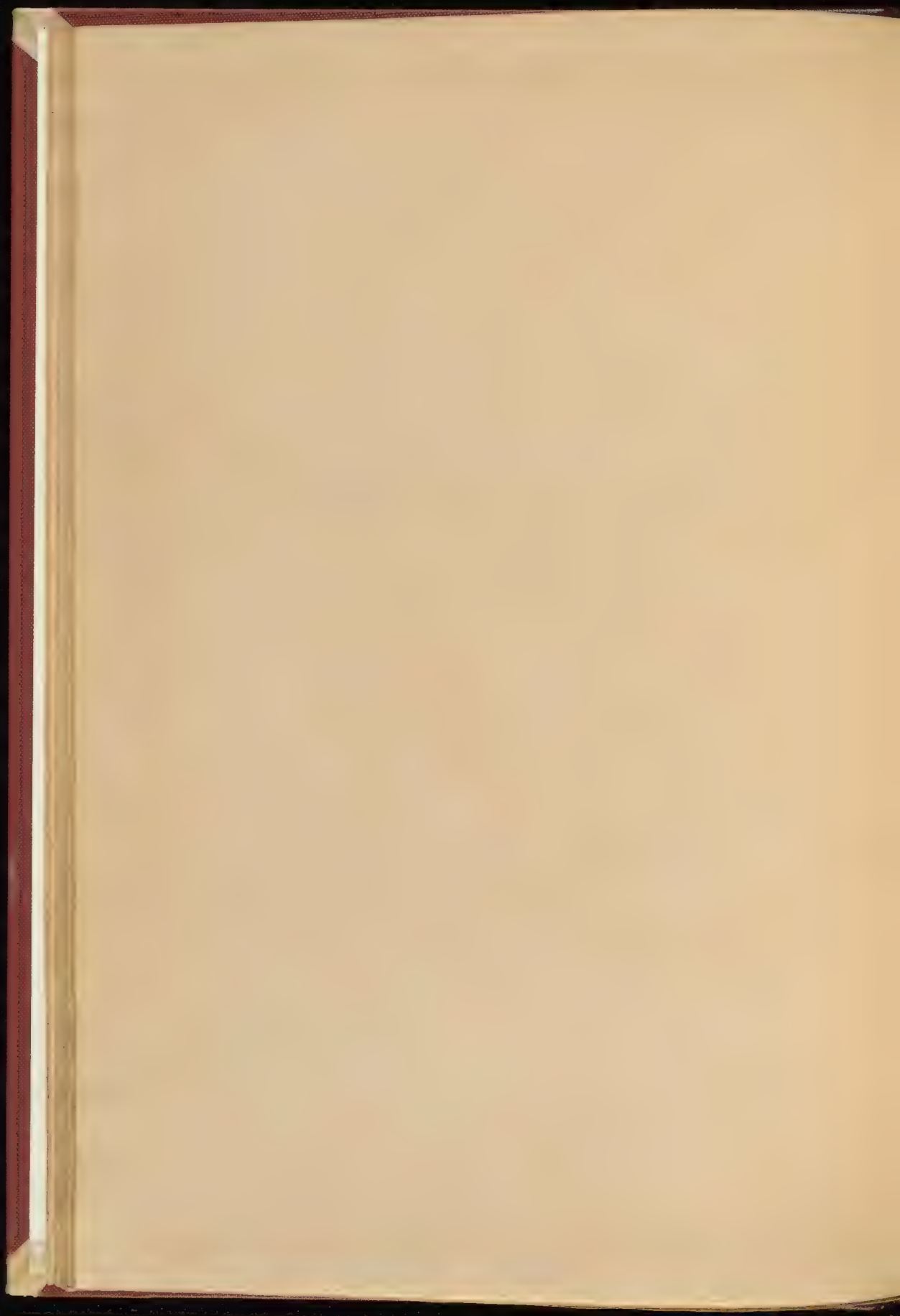


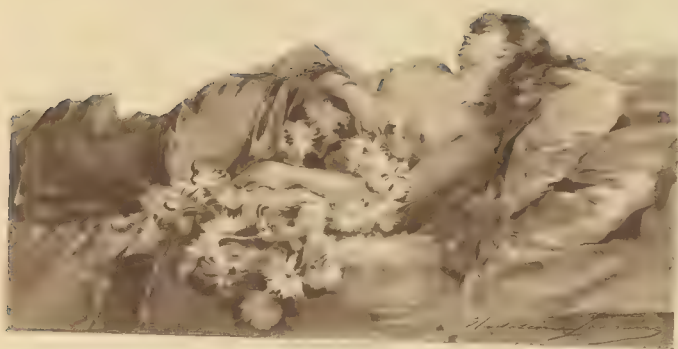












M^{ME} MADELEINE LEMAIRE



Madame Madeleine Lemaire has chosen, for painting, what nature has most divinely finished : flowers and women. She commenced with woman-kind to come to flowers; she has returned from flowers to women, or rather she has made of these two marvels of grace the two poles of her art. Her development has followed a most uncommon course in the midst of circumstances less favorable than ordinary for the education of an artist. It was far from Paris that painting sought this mutinous and petted young girl, who then was thinking of nothing beyond frolics in that Provence where, under a brilliant sky, bloom the finest roses.

Her parents watched her growth, living efflorescence of their heart,

without ambition or prejudice, only anxious to make her a prudent woman, lovely and good, worthy of the blood from which she sprung, and capable of honoring the name that later she would bear. Nothing is more unusual than for a society woman to be an artist for the sad reason that everything dissuades from continuous effort. The parents of M^{me} Lemaire could not therefore imagine that their child would be one of these charming exceptions; but born almost in the country destiny willed that early she should become a finished Parisienne, expert in the most subtle conversations, who, annexing to her salon an atelier, has become distinguished among the modern painters of *fantasie* and the refined water-colorists. How this singularity was produced I will try to explain.

I

Sainte-Rossoline is a small town in the department of the Var, silently gathered together under an oriental sky and bathed in shadows from the neighboring richly wooded mountains. Its



spacious old houses, whose white walls the sun and passing years have vaguely gilded, are surrounded by gardens where tuberose, heliotropes, roses, violets and orange-trees bloom. She who was to become M^{me} Lemaire was born midst this immemorial peace, and here passed her childish years.

Her father, the head of an ancient and always honored provençal family, filled the office of collector, justly enjoying the reputation of an affable and well informed man, and wise counsellor who gathered together, at his home receptions,

an agreeable and numerous company. M. Coll was serious without being stern: if not absorbed by matters pertaining to art at least he understood their charm. He was known as a relative of M. Belloc, who directed with honor at Paris the drawing school in the rue de l'Ecole-de-Médecine, and of M^{me} Herbelin, who, daughter of a general of the first Empire, had made for herself an enviable situation as a miniature painter. Often the

excellent man brought these two names into his talk and each time with evident pleasure. The little Madeleine, now approaching her tenth year, he saw at times trying to apply her pencil to paper and he would recommend her aunt's example in fatherly raillery. Or it so happened that at this time M^{me} Herbelin made a visit at Sainte-Rossoline. Who then was in the

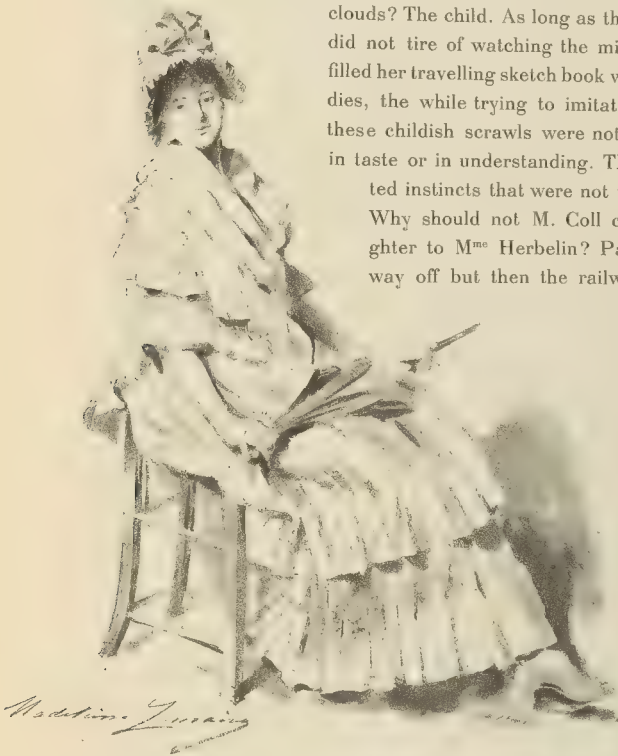
clouds? The child. As long as the day lasted she did not tire of watching the miniaturist as she filled her travelling sketch book with delicate studies, the while trying to imitate her. Certainly these childish scrawls were not wanting either in taste or in understanding. They surely denoted instincts that were not to be neglected.

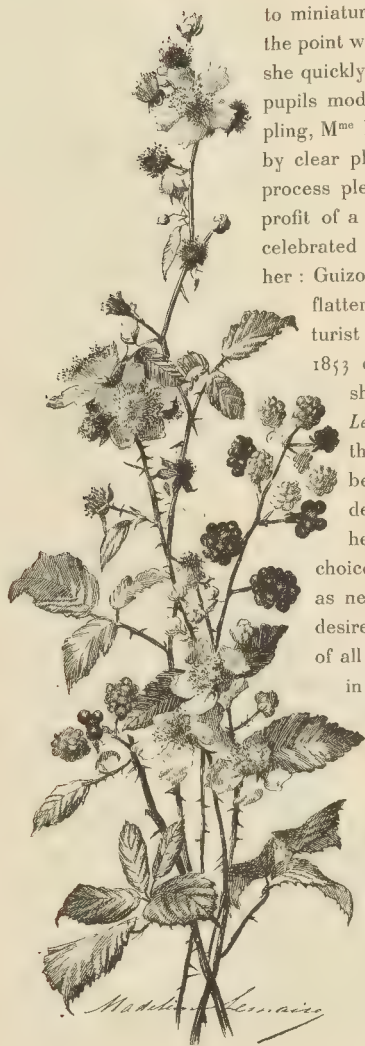
Why should not M. Coll confide his daughter to M^{me} Herbelin? Paris was a long way off but then the railways have as it

were suppressed the obstacle of distance. Sooner or later they must separate from Madeleine. The province is for certain educations wanting in resources. The result was a few months later M^{lle} Coll was at Paris, installed in her aunt's

home. It will be well to devote here a few lines to M^{me} Herbelin without whose aid M^{me} Lemaire might not have discovered herself. Women of such merit, distinguished, cordial, modest, are in all times rare.

At her debuts she attempted historical painting; but Delacroix, whom she consulted, discerning her real aptitudes, counselled her to devote herself





to miniature painting. Being able to draw with the point with precision, also being able to paint she quickly succeeded. M^{me} de Mirbel and her pupils modeled their smallest portraits by stippling, M^{me} Herbelin modeled hers, like Isabey, by clear planes, boldly touched. This renewed process pleased, and the artist used it to the profit of a real portraitist talent. A quantity of celebrated personages posed successively for her: Guizot, Rossini, Fleury and — the most

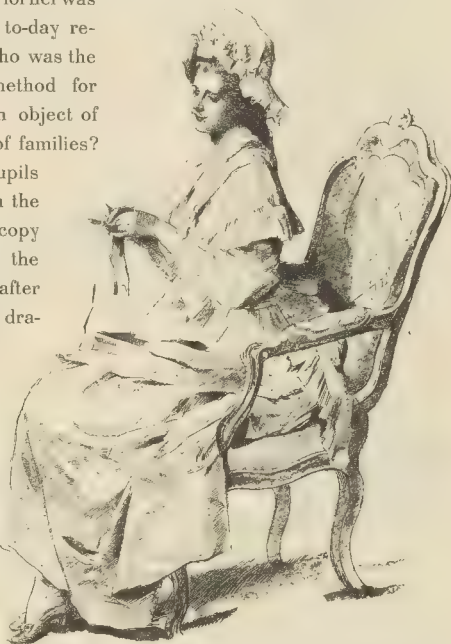
flattering approbation yet — the old miniaturist Isabey. The jury of the Exhibition of 1853 expressed officially their regret that she could not be decorated with the *Légion d'honneur*; but in those far off days they did not decorate women. M^{me} Herbelin wore her success easily, scarcely deigning to perceive it and redoubling her efforts. Evenings she received a choice society, her salon was justly noted as neutral and elegant, all that could be desired by those who wished to meet people of all shades of taste. The painters came in crowds and felt themselves at home; men of letters and musicians were cordially received and Parisians of distinguished manners were only required to be intelligent.

The appearance of Madeleine Coll was like a flattering smile, an unexpected attraction in these assemblies where nothing had seemed wanting. Talkative and lively, aiding her aunt in her duties as hostess, she went from group to group, questioning, responding, listening, retaining, pelted

by all, as at home among Parisians as she had formerly been in the parterres of Sainte-Rossoline. All day long she had studied with her instructress or drawn by the side of M^{me} Herbelin. The evening, she was allowed to initiate herself in social life. Such was the programme of education that was adopted for her.

This devoted aunt had however too much to do : she was forced to give up her role as nominal professor and send her niece to follow a drawing class. The class she chose for her was that of M^{me} Cavé. Who to-day remembers this woman, who was the author of a special method for teaching drawing and an object of infatuation to mothers of families?

M^{me} Cavé made her pupils trace an engraving, then the pupils made a free hand copy of the engraving using the tracing to correct with, after which they repeated the drawing from memory. This system was better qualified to amuse children than to advance them. It is of little importance to be able to reproduce without a model arabesques or the details of an engraving; the essential is to be able to transpose nature herself on the



paper. It is well to add that M^{lle} Coll whilst following these exercises that were useful in forming her hand, drew assiduously from busts, counselled to do so by M. Belloc and by this means she made rapid progress. She had light and modeling, a refined intelligence she understood wonderfully forms and values, and her fourteenth year was not completed when M^{me} Herbelin presented her to the painter Chaplin, who taught her painting.

M. Chaplin has no decided system nor pedagogic mania. He places a young girl before a living model, charging her to observe it closely and to give it with the utmost fidelity of which she is capable. Here is a clean canvas, there a palette and colors. The girl of fourteen bravely attacked her study, but difficulties soon detained her. How to arrive at the end? She fumbled, she lost herself tried in twenty different ways, changed her canvas,

became obstinate, listened to her master and finally extricated herself from her difficulty. The master, to sum up was satisfied. The pupil constructed her figures well and saw them

agreeable in tone. In a few months she became familiar with the handicraft; — she became enamored with art. M^{lle} Henriette Browne (since the baronne de Sault)

had just left Chaplin's atelier and her first pictures, exhibited at the Salon, created a sensation in society. —

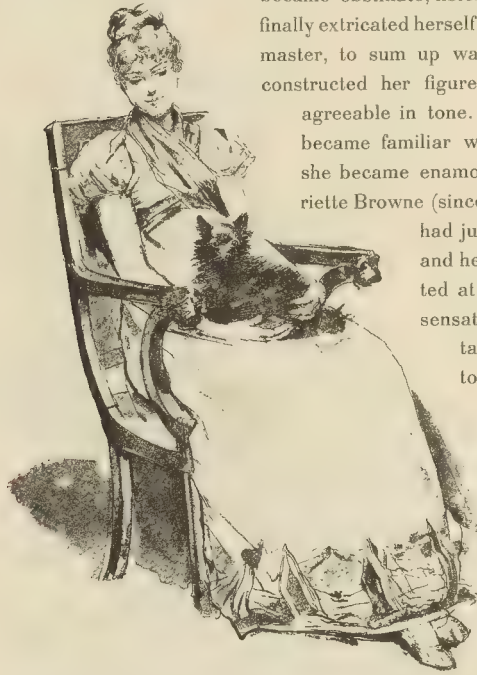
Certainly here was material to excite the imagination of a young girl. That of Madeleine Coll was in ebullition as might have been expected.

II

It astonishes me that this, doubtful and decisive, interven-

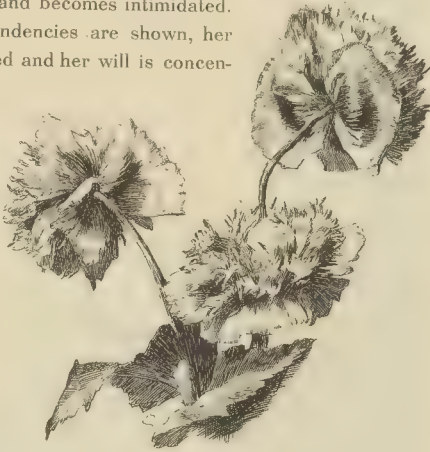
ing period of young girls life; from the age of fourteen to sixteen, attracts in so slight degree writers of romances. It is the mysterious epoch, when sensible to the most fleeting influences opens, from the child, that which our french forefathers so charming designated by the word : *la jeune fille* (the lass).

The crisis of the ingrate age is overcome; life is strengthened in the



still frail body, that growth has exhausted and whose organs are now finding their balance. The intelligence more agile and better steadied becomes bolder. The child is no more; the woman is preparing and already there is a presentiment of her approach. The eyes of the young girl have seen a thousand things that she has not penetrated but that she wishes to fathom; a thousand curiosities, vague until now take form and shape. She looks attentively, remembers, listens, interrogates herself, questions and seeks to arrange in her unsettled mind her accumulated impressions. Always innocent, she divines the evil and becomes intimidated. At the same time her tendencies are shown, her desires become pronounced and her will is concentrated.

This parenthesis that I will now close may surprise you, but consider that I am analyzing a young girl at this doubtful moment when her entire future is being elaborated. Madeleine Coll is about to devote herself to something, but to what? More than ever ardent, studying by day, and amusing herself the evening the



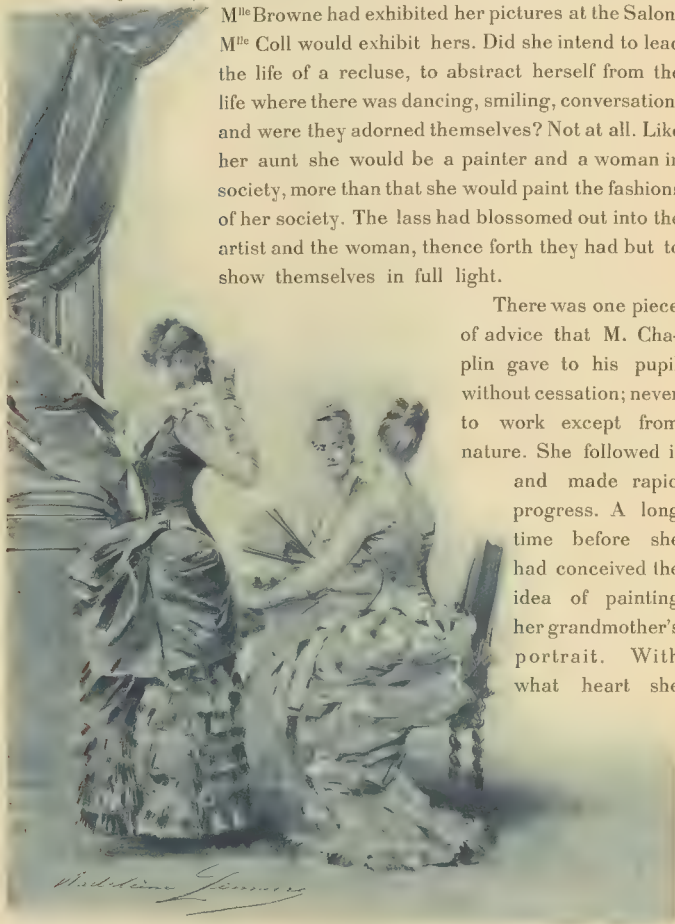
hours passed without showing the indications of an irresistible vocation. For the last four years she had been breaking the points of her pencils, since two months she had handled brushes; she enjoyed drawing, she delighted in painting but who would dare affirm that these happy instincts might not be overcome by the preoccupations of society? Certainly they would do nothing to excite or change her ideas, circumstances must decide.

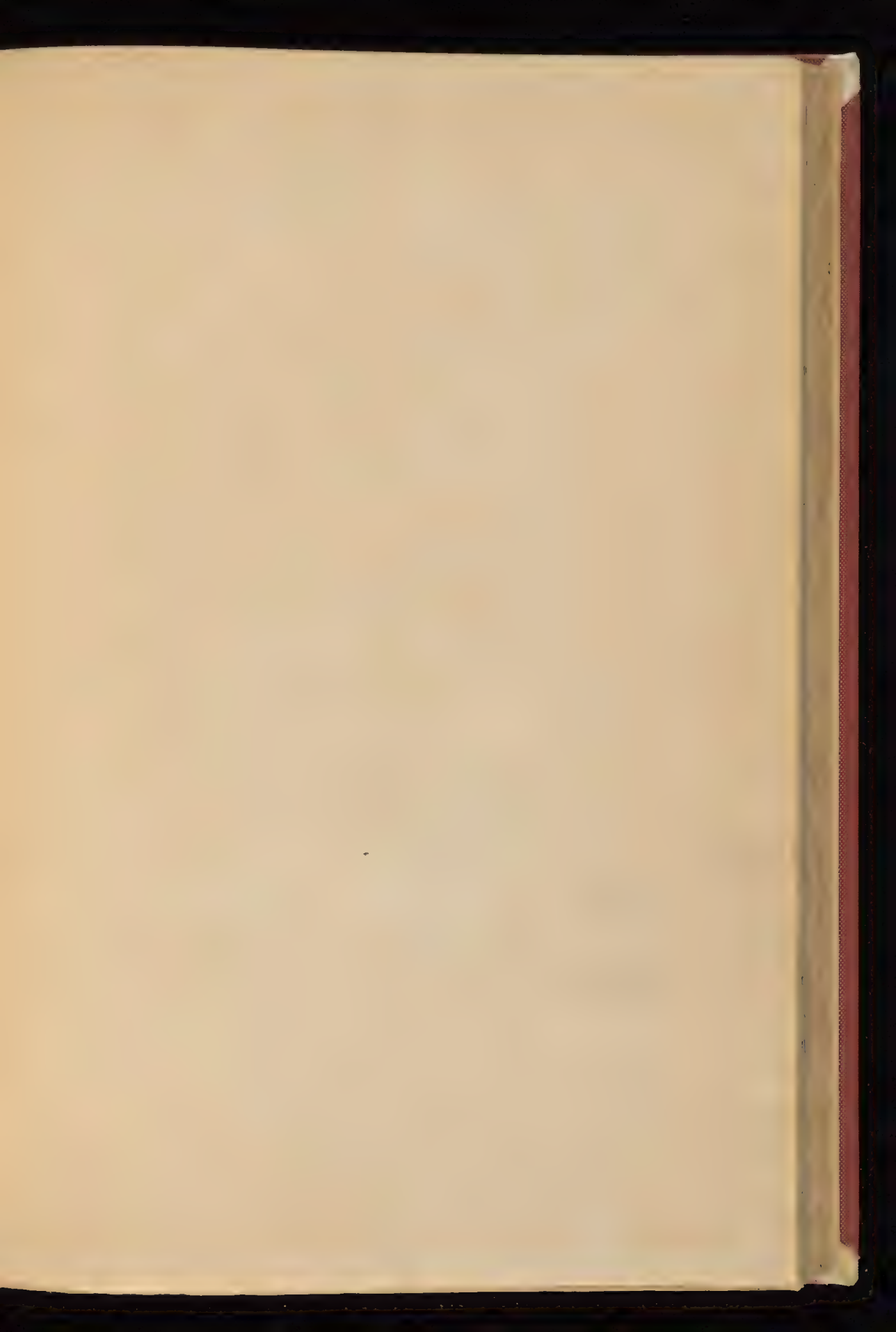
The former collector of Sainte-Rossoline had recently left his native place, and at present is *receveur des finances* at Sens. His daughter passed her vacations with him and he did not fail to visit Paris occasionally during the year elated as he was by the charm that she exhaled by the flexibility of her mind and the distinction of her bearing. However, Madeleine painted on more and more excitedly, from morning till night she was before her easel

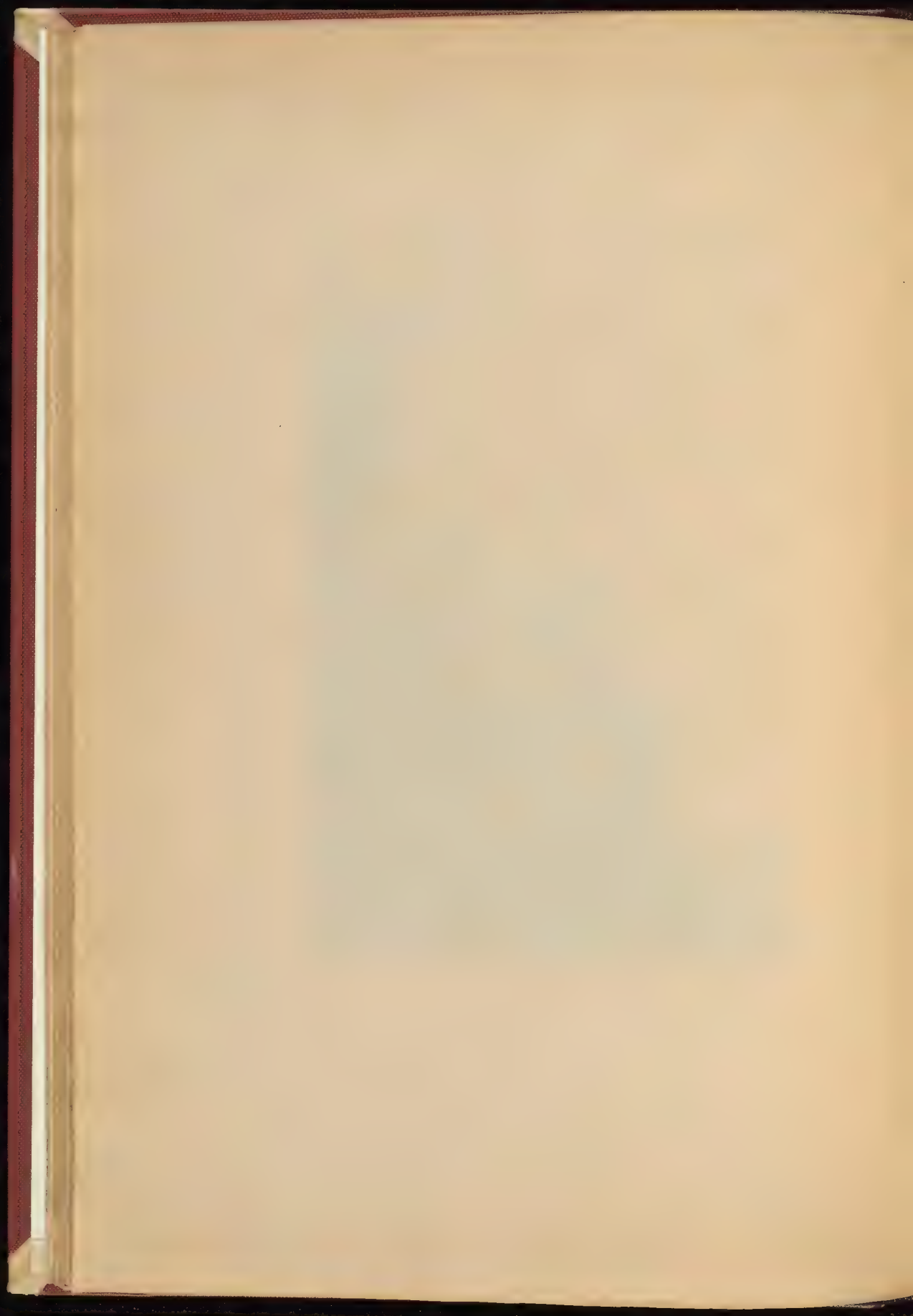
brushing study upon study. M. Coll one day astonished asked the upshot of all this extra zeal, she explained herself to him clearly. — Painting was not to be for her a means for passing the time but a career. M^{me} Herbelin had made her way in one direction, she would make hers in a different way.

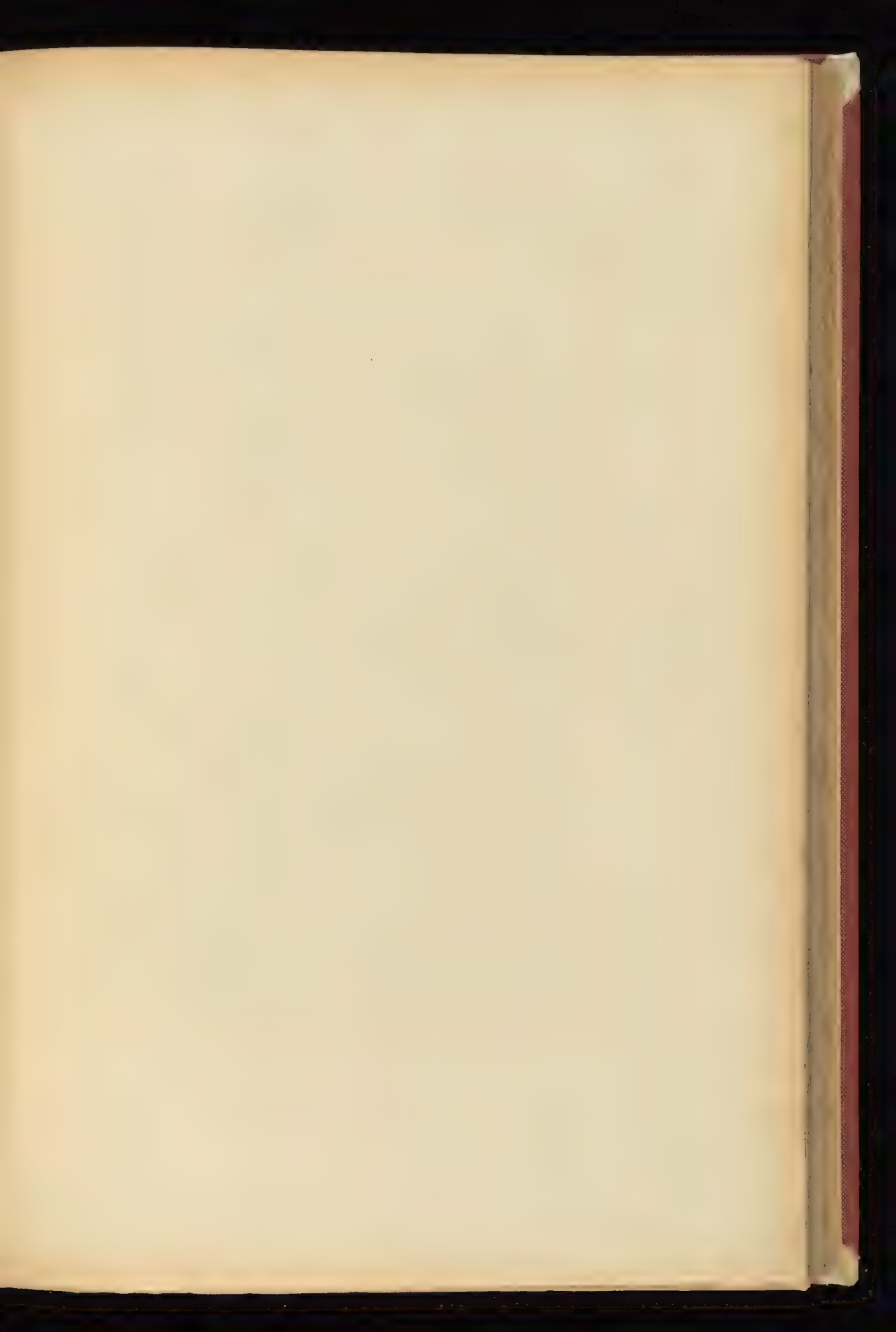
M^{lle} Browne had exhibited her pictures at the Salon; M^{lle} Coll would exhibit hers. Did she intend to lead the life of a recluse, to abstract herself from the life where there was dancing, smiling, conversation, and were they adorned themselves? Not at all. Like her aunt she would be a painter and a woman in society, more than that she would paint the fashions of her society. The lass had blossomed out into the artist and the woman, thence forth they had but to show themselves in full light.

There was one piece of advice that M. Chaplin gave to his pupil without cessation; never to work except from nature. She followed it and made rapid progress. A long time before she had conceived the idea of painting her grandmother's portrait. With what heart she

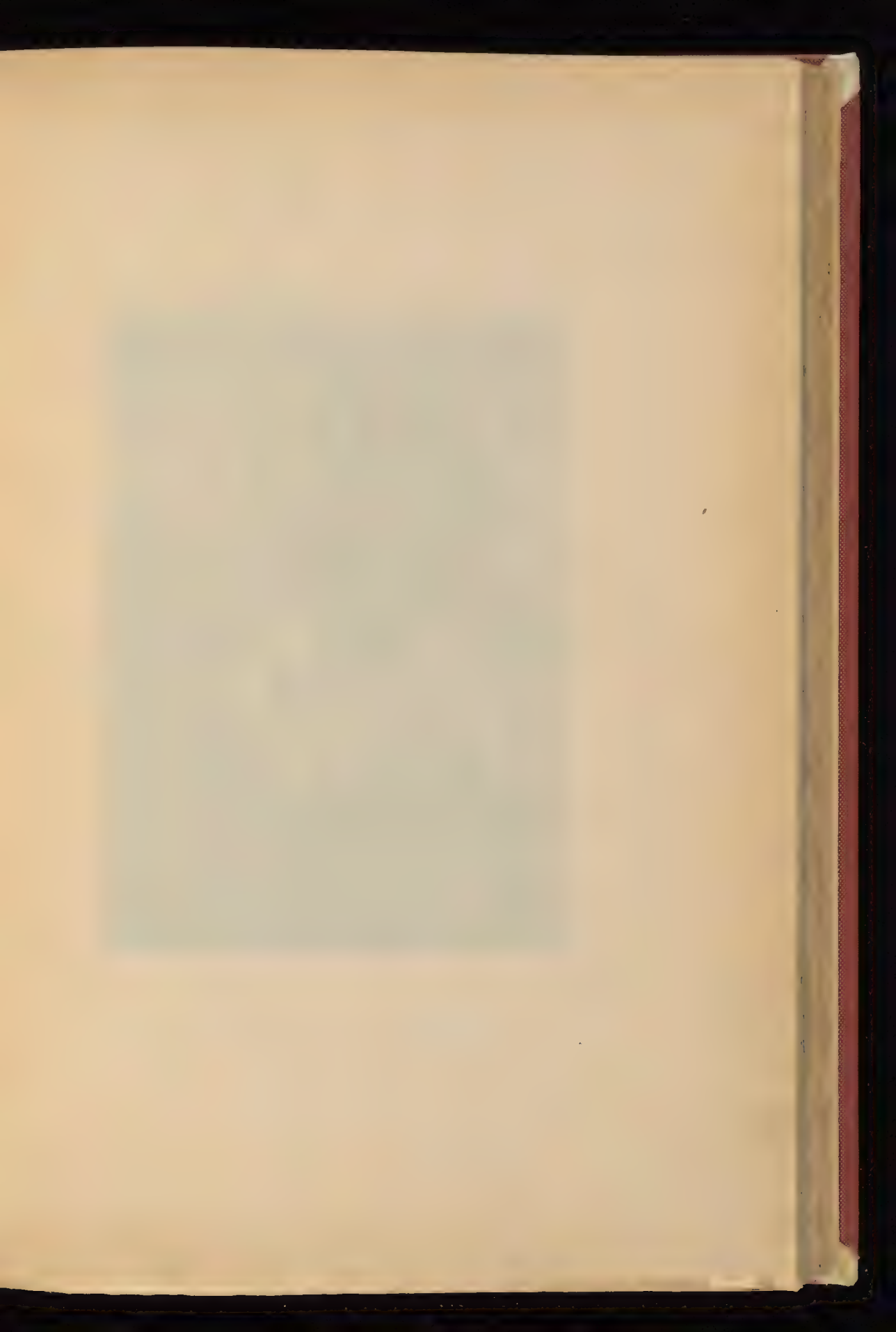






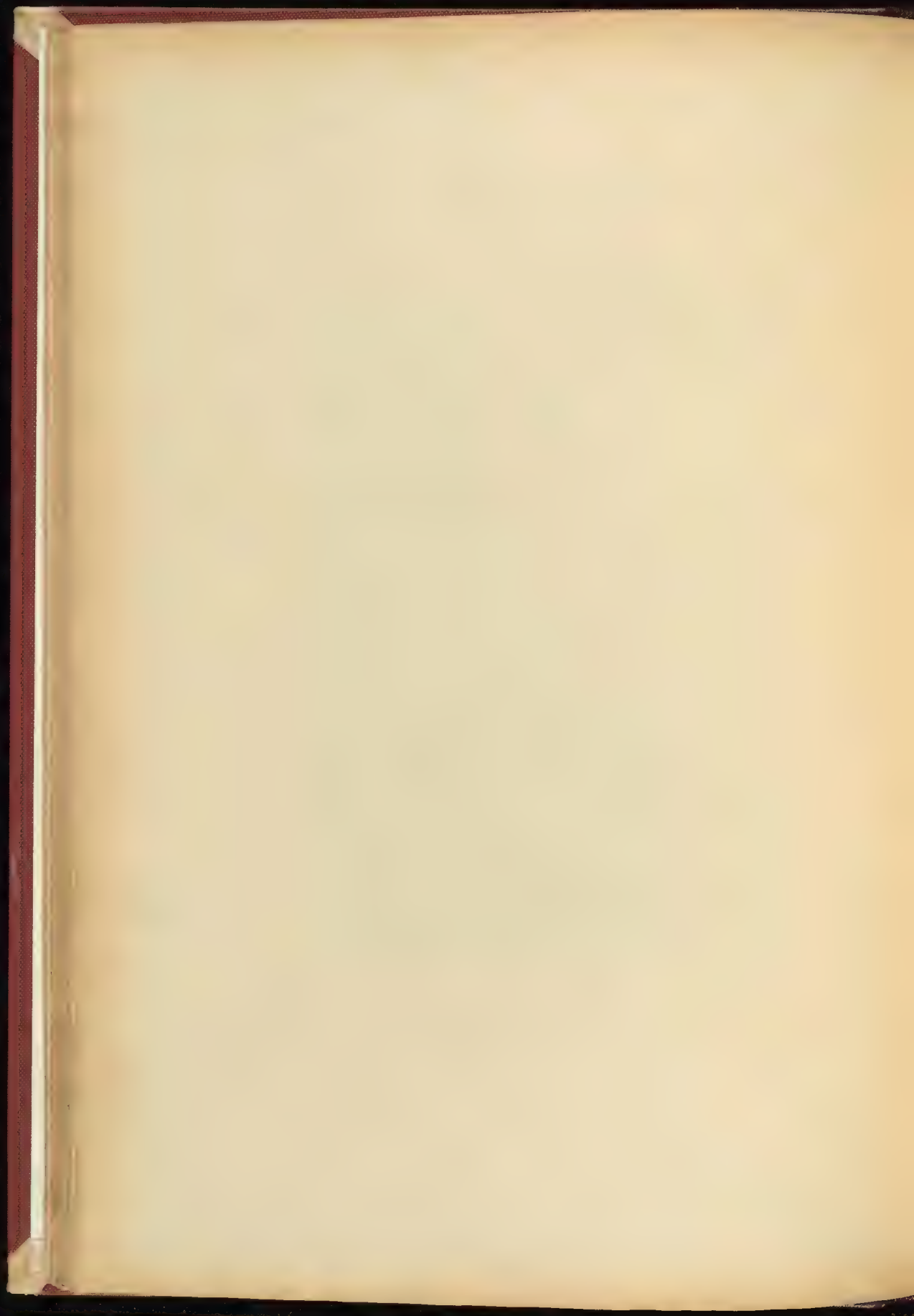


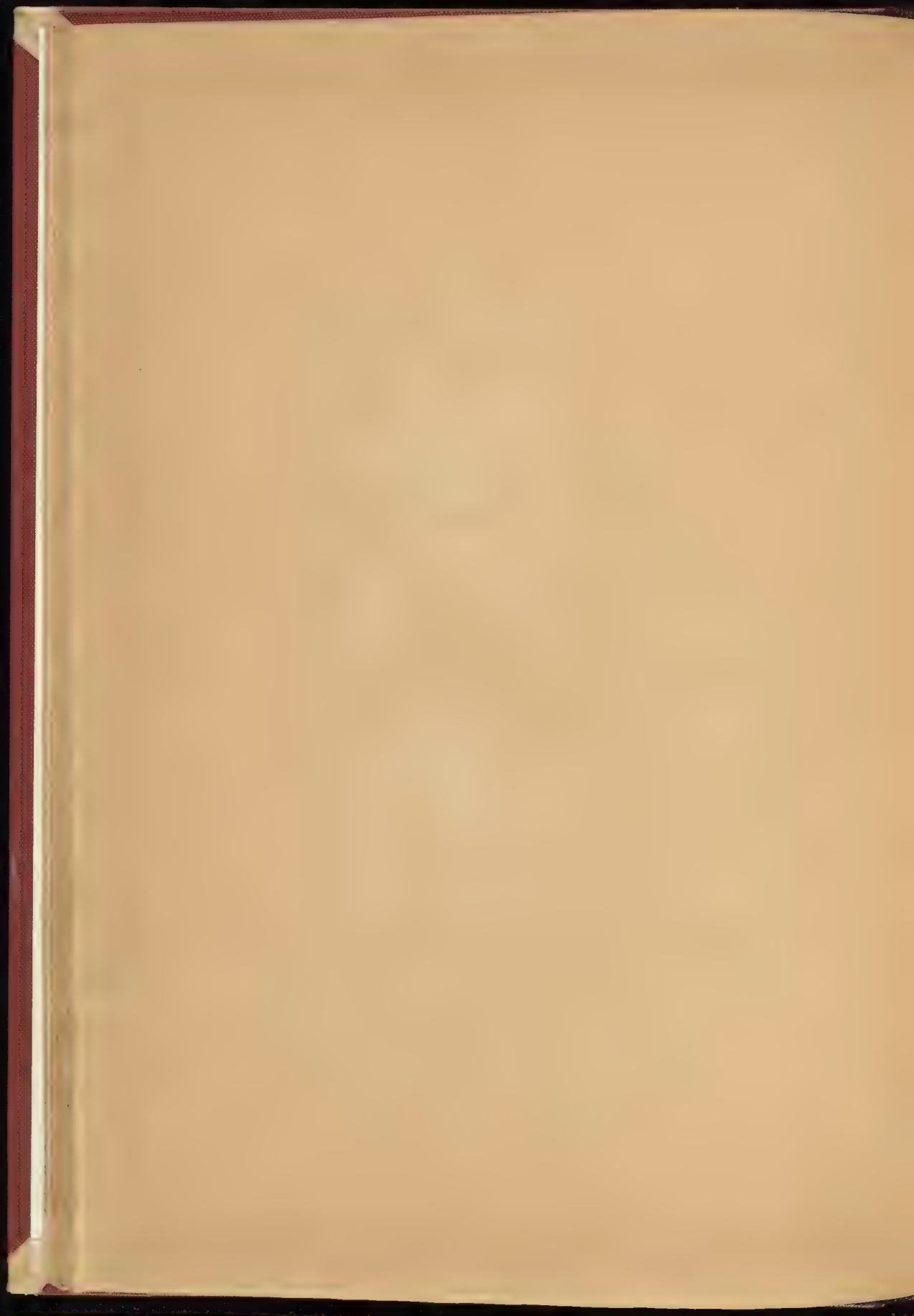




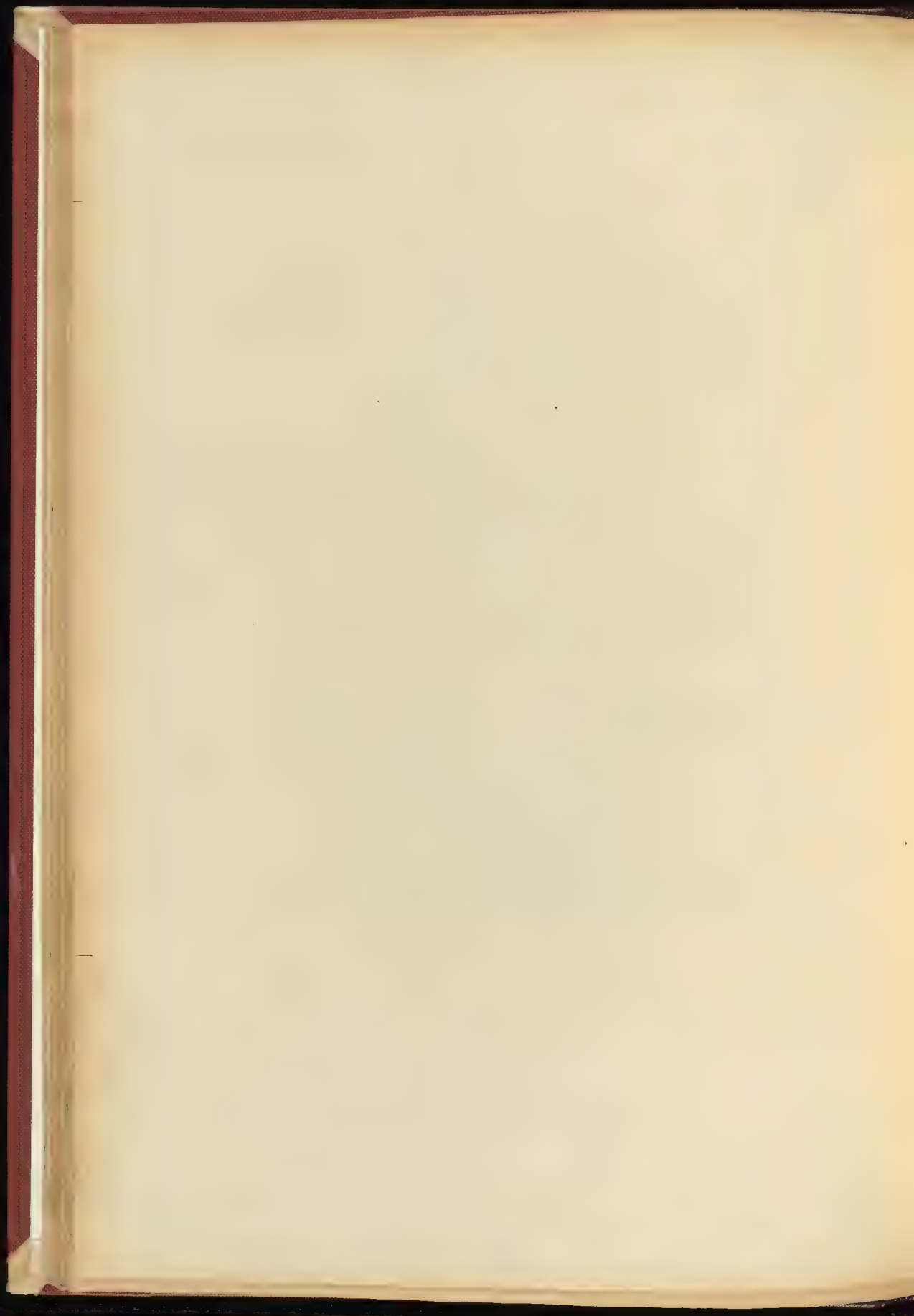










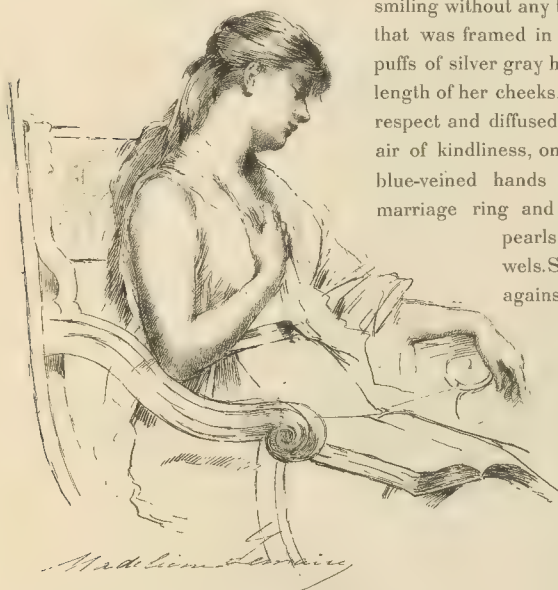


commenced it as soon as she was permitted! She was not indifferent to the smallest detail: it was her dear grandmother and all her life that she would put upon the canvas. The grandmother's patience was inexhaustable. Seated in her armchair, with hands crossed, the head enveloped in a hood of black silk half hiding a fanchon of white lace, she posed immovable as long as her imperious granddaughter pleased. A serene and pale visage,

smiling without any trace of grief, that was framed in by two large puffs of silver gray hair falling the length of her cheeks, she inspired respect and diffused about her an air of kindliness, on her dimpled blue-veined hands glittered the marriage ring and one of fine

pearls, familiar jewels. She was placed against a dull red

drapery that made a rich and simple background. The portrait terminated in the month of march 1864, was sent to the Salon. It



was remarked on all sides for the conscientious execution, perhaps a little hard, but vigorous and distinguished, and above all for the style and that sincerity of manner that ranked it with the portraits of the last century. The influence of M. Chaplin was to be discerned but only as a sign of origin. There was a question, in the jury, of a medal for this canvas, but one of the jurors was opposed, alleging that the artist was only sixteen years old. Would you like to know the name of this juror enemy of youth? It was Adrien Danzats, one of the accustomed guests of M^{me} Herbelin. Who would have faith in current friendships!...

M^{lle} Coll had not hoped for a recompence so as she expected nothing from the official areopagus, there was no disappointment in receiving nothing. In return she was agreeably stirred by the sympathies that encouraged her. What should she paint next? This was difficult to decide she had painted a portrait; now she must try another style. She was invited to visit at Dieppe a children's hospital, she saw there in a corner sisters of charity washing the faces of a troupe of miserable and ragged little brats. This is the

subject of her picture of the Salon of 1865, which did not pass unperceived.



Notwithstanding, the populace was not her affair: it was not the faces of the poor that was suited to her brushes, neither their rags or their misery. One is surest of representing well what they best know. The young artist had all the coqueties of a parisian. She was fond of silks and velvets; the gaiety of attire, the harmony of luxury, the happy unconcern of

fresh visages like her own. No bitterness has ever troubled her joy: then how could her talent be bitter? A costume of the Directoire that she had worn at a ball suggested to her to paint some Merveilleuses. The exhibitions and operetta theatres had not yet rendered commonplace these curiously eccentric fashions, that M^{me} Tallien made illustrious and that the Empire accepted with scarcely any change: It was an interesting vein to exploit. At first to get her hand in she painted a little picture, "la Marguerite, a gallant incroyable picking a flower leaf by leaf at the feet of a laughing Recamier. This was no sooner finished than she attacked a large M^{lle} Angot,

with auburn hair, piercing black eyes sensual mouth, proud of her bare arms, her jonquil dress and hat trimmed with red plumes. Another time it is a woman attired in the dress of imperial times that she represents, brunette with sunken eyes, the hair becurled, I seem yet to see it. But do not be deceived, under these fantastic accouterments, Parisians of the present time are to be recognised. The costume so ingeniously arranged recall the dress of old time and are of to day. Modernity disguises itself at will and laughs at archaisms and this is if I am not mistaken the original note of M^{lle} Coll.

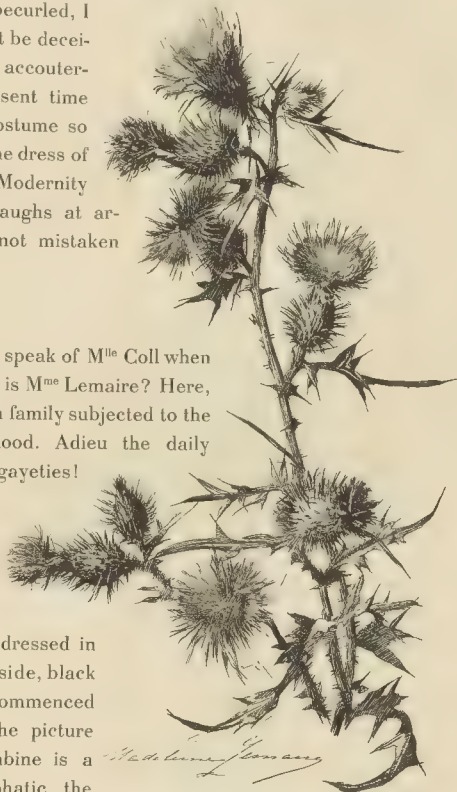
III

But why do I continue to speak of M^{lle} Coll when since some time already she is M^{me} Lemaire? Here, already she is the mother of a family subjected to the dear exigencies of motherhood. Adieu the daily work! Adieu the whirlpool of gayeties!

The artist belongs to her serious duties. Will she forget and lose her talent? No for at the first glimpse of liberty, the desire comes to her to paint a

large full length Colombine dressed in rose colored satin, hat on one side, black velvet mask in the hand. She commenced working at once and soon the picture took form and color. Colombine is a pretty blond girl, pale, lymphatic, the

complexion heightened by a suspicion of fard: there is nothing of the dapper adventuress of the italian stage; it is a *demoiselle* of new Paris, dressed to appear in a drawing room comedy. M^{me} Lemaire painted a sister picture for the Exhibition of 1877 a "Manon" dressed in blue velvet, green velvet freely decked with red and white bows, deliciously bathed in red. Also



this piquant Manon is found to be adorable; her costume comes from the hands of one of the fashionable makers: we have but to accost her; she is of our time and from head to foot of our blood and being so, we but like her the better. Decidedly the artist has resumed her normal life. She



reappears at entertainments, at first-night performances at the opening of exhibitions; she is every where as well as at home indefatigable and gracious. In emulating they compliment her.—It is not known that in her there are two women: the woman of the drawing-room who smiles at compliments and the atelier woman who will not listen

to them. Water-colors had not yet enrolled her, her enrolment was sudden.

The Italian Simonetti had exposed, on the boulevard, two little Louis XV subjects, "le Concert" and "la Rencontre", freely and skillfully done, with color strongly bathed in water. Many did not notice them; M^{me} Lemaire was allured in the greatest degree by them and this allurements made her an aquarelliste. She procured a box of those excellent colors that are prepared with honey and of which the English have a monopoly,

retired, in the neighborhood of Dieppe, and there she passed the summer of 1870 washing in water-colors — a strange combination! — of donkeys and flowers. The donkeys passed away but flowers remained. As far back as the artist can remember she had been intoxicated with the fairy aspects of the parterres and it is an unalloyed pleasure for her to imitate them. Roses and camelias bewitch her, the rhododendrons and azaleas are delightful to her; pink hollyhocks are her friends, the poppies, chrysanthemums, daisies

and pinks make her their confident. Nature has lavished in an infinite quantity, and without measure varied these ephemeral and constantly renewed chefs-d'œuvre, that M^{me} Lemaire has taken for her models. Her tables are loaded her consoles and mantels are resplendent; she has them in baskets, in faïence vases, in cristal cornets; she paints them glowing and frenzied. The Flemish painters, Redouté and his school, were but cold botanical illustrators of herbals rather than the flower's interpreters, she pursues an entirely different purpose. Her hand traces the fleeting forms of calyx and leaf; the color diluted in water animated the bouquet suddenly inundated with light. Now the water spreads upon the paper barely tinting it and now less wet the tones warmly assert themselves. No mannerism, nothing small. It is not an official report on horticulture; but the real play of colors of entangled petals. The touch frank, polished sure of herself underlining what she paints and gliding over the rest. The relative exactness of the tones shows the painter, whilst the spirit of the touch makes the woman felt and this astonishing virtuosity is without the shadow of an affectation.

The Society d'Aquarellistes français had only to be founded, M^{me} Lemaire was immediately designed to take her place there. She had shown at the annual Salon not only roses and chrysanthemums, that were praised by more than one critic but besides a charming portrait of a young girl, with floating hair, standing before a blue plush drapery, this procured for her a mention honorable, and two or three other small figures. She became well known, and but wanted the opportunity to become the fashion.

IV

We are in the month of april 1879. The water-color Society regularly organised since a short time, inaugurates its series of exhibitions. Each member of the Society drew lots for the places for their water-colors, and arranged them according to their taste. What did M^{me} Lemaire exhibit? A new rose Colombine of sprightly mien, and a little Parisian in red velvet dressing-gown studying geography on a blue enamel globe. What else? A basket of pansies, poppies, rose hollyhocks; three or four brightly lighted fireworks around the figure subjects. The panel presented a radiant illumination. All Paris was amazed, so, at a stroke the artist was on the pinnacle.

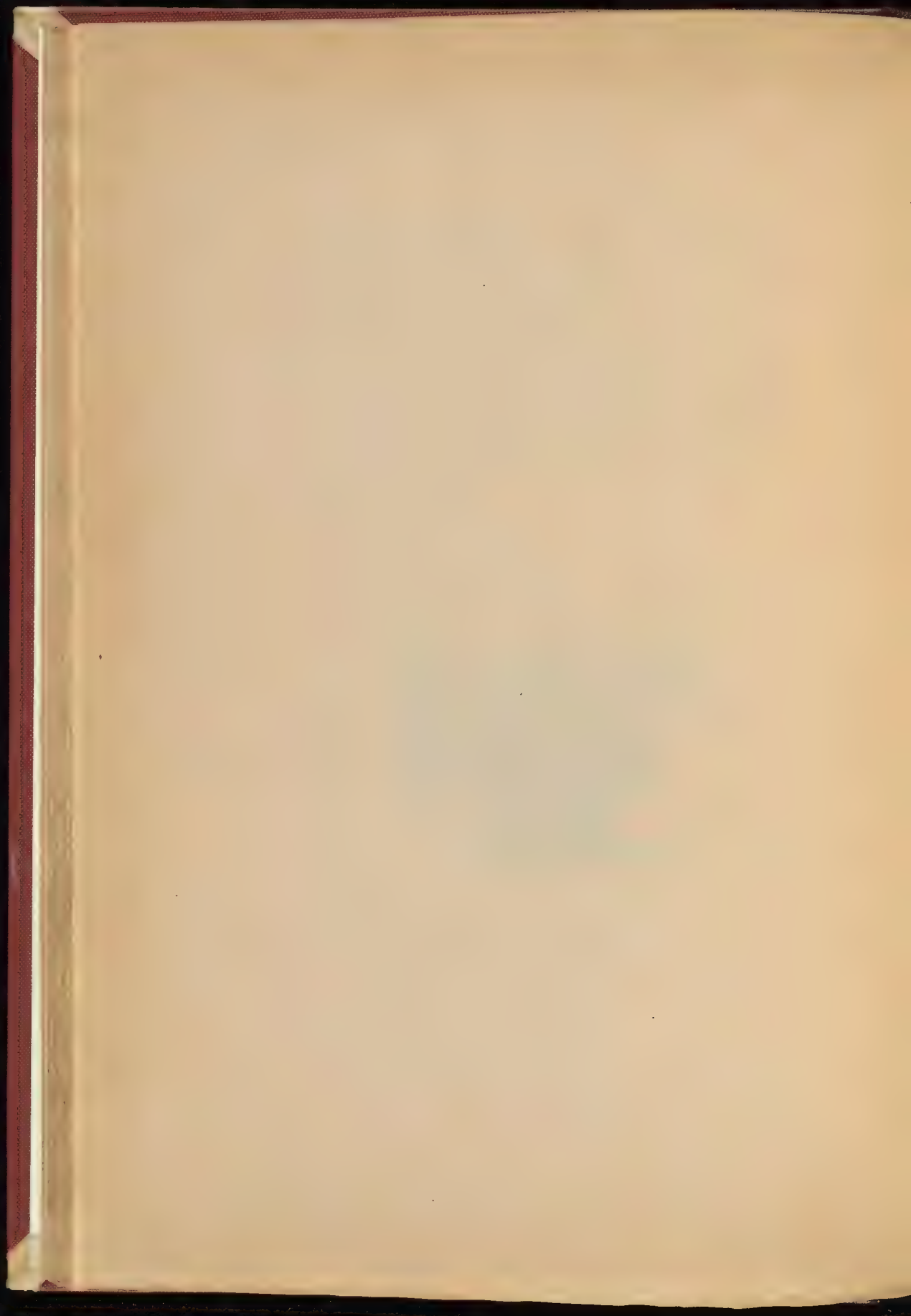
Knock at the door of her atelier; buyers and collectors dispute the last performance of her brushes. Orders menaced to circumscribe her; but

M^{me} Lemaire only consented to work according to her inclination and what she produced showed no falling off. At the following exhibitions, she sent roses and honeysuckles, pinks, chrysanthemums, poppies, fruits, and among the fruit certain peaches equal in vermillion beauty to those which the adolescent Jean Racine made "autant de petits soleils".

I will add but a word in conclusion. The talent of our water-colorist owes something to Chaplin and a great deal to the atmosphere of her life. She may attempt new subjects, abandon flowers for fruit, leave interiors for landscape, the charming dishabille for the gallant in full dress or the dressed for the nude; she will not change the foundation of her personality. Her work will be the evocation of woman's condition at the end of the nineteenth century, and altogether one of the happiest manifestations that I know of feminine art.

FOURCAUD.

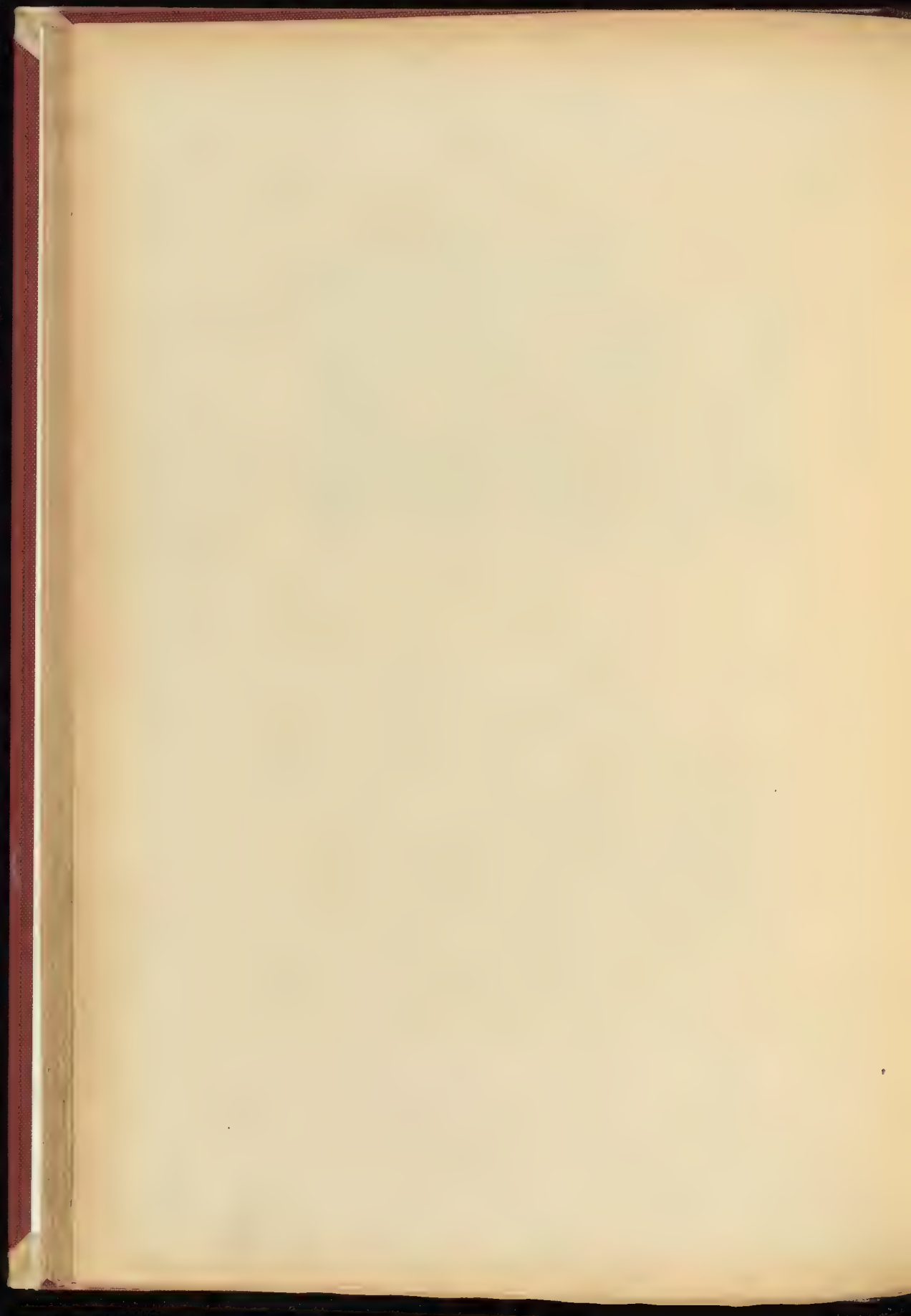
















A. DE NEUVILLE



At number 89 of the boulevard Pereire sud, overlooking a clump of acacias trees with which the sides of the circular railway is bordered, stands a hotel whose large windows proclaim it to be the dwelling of a painter. It is here that de Neuville has recently installed his atelier, which is surrounded by the superb apartments whose ceilings have been decorated by Emmanuel Jadin. His atelier, which is very large, is also a real museum. Here we find one of the most curious collection of arms that can be met with-anywhere. Along an immense wall, closely pressed together are the guns of all nations, about them every imaginable variety of military headgear, from the prussian helmet with its iron lance to the english

cap muffled in a long veil. Elsewhere Japanese armors, like some monster's carapace. Then on all sides, on easels huge portfolios where are col-



lected together the photographs of many celebrated, pictures. On the hangings, a few water-colors and some studies. But nothing more. We are conscious of being in the presence of an artist whose works are watched for by the dealers, are ordered a long time before they can be executed. It is here that in future will labor this interesting and productive artist whose physiognomy I wish to trace. Physically, a man of medium height having the bearing

of a young hussar officer, wearing willingly a coat à brandebourgs

and a sort visorless citizen's kepi which completes the illusion. The eye has an extraordinary vivacity, a small moustache curls upon his lip. Although de Neuville has passed forty, his hair, which he wears short, is black and abundant. All in his physiognomy breathes loyalty, courage, an honest and satisfied conscience, and this physiognomy is not deceptive. Few men have been able to keep around themselves, as many old friendships, whose warmth has never cooled nor diminished. He know neither envy nor jealousy. His dearest comrade is his rival in talent, Detaille. I do not know one enemy of de Neuville. And yet, he is far from being a complaisant person. He is a man of firm convictions who clearly expresses his thoughts and never compromises. In all things a man of action he is every where a militant. He has on all subjects positive



opinions that he defends with as much vigor as obstination. We shall speak of this again in reference to his water-color theories. Useless to state that this painter, today celebrated, was not destined by his family to painting. They intended that his career should be in the Conseil d'Etat, and if we have not one more maître des requêtes, it is not the fault of his family. At school, in fact, de Neuville had made what is termed "de bonnes études" that is to say that at sixteen years of age he was bachelier ès lettres after having taken a serie of annual prizes, to the sound of martial music and at the end of discourses which invariably commenced thus : " Dear children, this reunion is truly a family gathering, " etc... But instead



of commencing immediately his law studies, our laureate discovered, between times, an irresistible vocation for the navy, he entered a preparatory school at Lorient, and there commen-

ced the study of drawing, under the rule of an old master familiarly named by his pupils *papa Duhousset*

and at once realised that he would never like any thing else as much in life, even if the glorious destiny of Jean-Bart were open to him. But his parents were firm and when he had given up the "Borda", it was to

take his place on the benches where acquaintance is made with the Pandects and other french and roman judicial jests. Let us be just however. It would be wrong to accuse de Neuville of having worn out



the stock of the Law school. Neither the aged Pellat, who has the air of a nut-cracker, nor the venerable Bonnier, who stammers out his instructions, nor the dapper Duranton, nor antique Portès, whose remaining energy only enables him to put a black ball in the urn at examinations, can boast of having often seen his visage. I like to believe that he disturbed himself twice at least to make their caricatures in pen and ink. Note that this did not prevent his passing his examinations brilliantly. Which proves how necessary are the lectures of these majestically begowned men. There remained the thesis. Once the thesis passed, the Conseil d'Etat was there yawning. De Neuville felt the chill and drew back. He said very distinctly

to his people that his intention was to deprive definitely the french administration of his services and become a painter. This resolution did not produce a tempest of enthusiasm in his family; but it imposed by its definite character.

They judged however, that first of all the reality of this vocation should be assured and if his aptness was sufficient to authorise it. Bellangé was the first one consulted. He was not encouraging and exhorted the young artist to renounce the career. Yvon was next taken for judge he showed no greater intuitive power than his predecessor and found the sketches shown him insignificant. Picot deigned at last, without being more convinced, to receive in his atelier he who was to so rapidly conquer a legitimate renown. Delacroix who came later, more discerning, encouraged de Neuville with quite different authority, interested himself in his debuts, counselled him sometimes, repeating to him his eternal aphorism of which his work is but a living and magnificent translation : " The drawing of the movement itself before the drawing of the form ! " Do not these early tribulations of a young painter seeking to be enlightened as to his own value recall to you those of poor Hamon, to whom M. Ingres repeated until the last day : " Never will you be able to paint. "

It was in the rue Breda that de Neuville had his first atelier and made his first picture in 1858 : " 5^e bataillon de chasseurs, batterie Gervais, assaut de Malakoff ". Picot himself was surprised and the jury also, and at the Salon of 1859 this debut



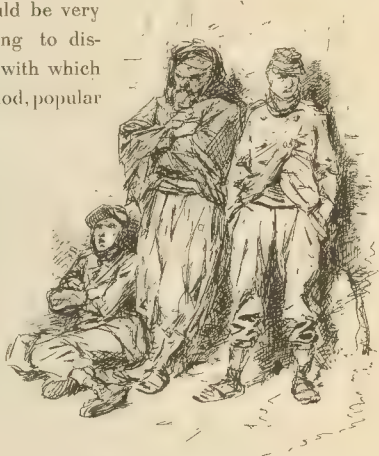
was encouraged by a third class medal. An order rewarded this first success and the young artist went to Italy to paint for I know not what



provençal club a "Prise de Naples par Garibaldi" who has not remained so popular. In 1866, his second offering to the Salon of "Tranchées du Mamelon vert" obtained another recompense a second medal, and the name of de Neuville was made among artists and the public. But buyers had not yet arrived and it was at this time that our painter fell back on illustrating, where he has left a singularly luminous and original trace. His dramatic and descriptive talent, at once picturesque and touching as a whole suited this kind of work, that demands a quick intelligence, great facility and a trained hand. — De Neuville would be very wrong to dis-

avow the innumerable drawings with which he enriched, during a certain period, popular and choice publications, for he contributed powerfully to their popularisation and they will ever be eagerly sought for on account of the living, personal and amusing note that they contain.

He reappeared at the Salon of 1864 with "L'Attaque des rues de Magenta par les zouaves de la garde", to day in the possession of the museum of Saint-Omer, his native town. In 1866, he exhibited "La Sentinelle de zouaves", a picture full of profound sentiment, that made sensation. In 1868, he reproduced an episode of the Mexican war : "La Bataille de San Lorenzo".



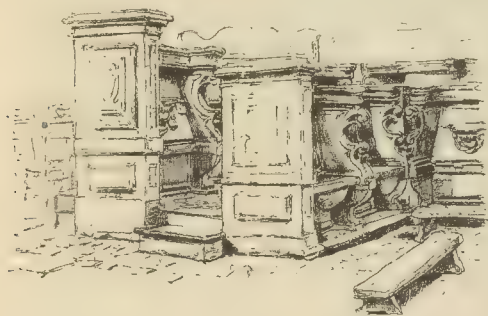
The career of this picture was curious. It was bought, one fine morning, by a Turk whose noble master had given him the mission to purchase a nude figure. This strange ambassador not finding one in the prescribed dimension, fell back on a military canvas. It is thus that the concupiscent taste of an oriental was frustrated and a heroic view was offered him in place of the desired voluptuous painting that he expected. De Neuville can therefore boast of having contributed to the moralisation of a harem. In 1868, great success for "*Les Chasseurs à pied traversant la Tchernaià*", that can to day be admired in the Lille museum, that possesses several chefs-d'œuvre among others the "*Médée*" of Delacroix and the "*Veillée à Ornans*" of Courbet.

Then the war broke out.

At first auxiliary officer of engineers, de Neuville soon entered l'état-major of general Callier and made all the campaign in the environs of invested Paris, witnessed the heroic assault of Bourget and the heartrend-

ing battle of Champigny. It was for him a field of sorrowful studies, where his talent, arrived at full virility, acquired new strenght and gave forth most tragic and touching accents. We have felt from this time, in

his least canvases, an immense love for the obscure soldier that falls under an anonymous ball, that all the world forgets the next-day, but whom the fatherland always remembers. It seems as if a little of the soul of all these

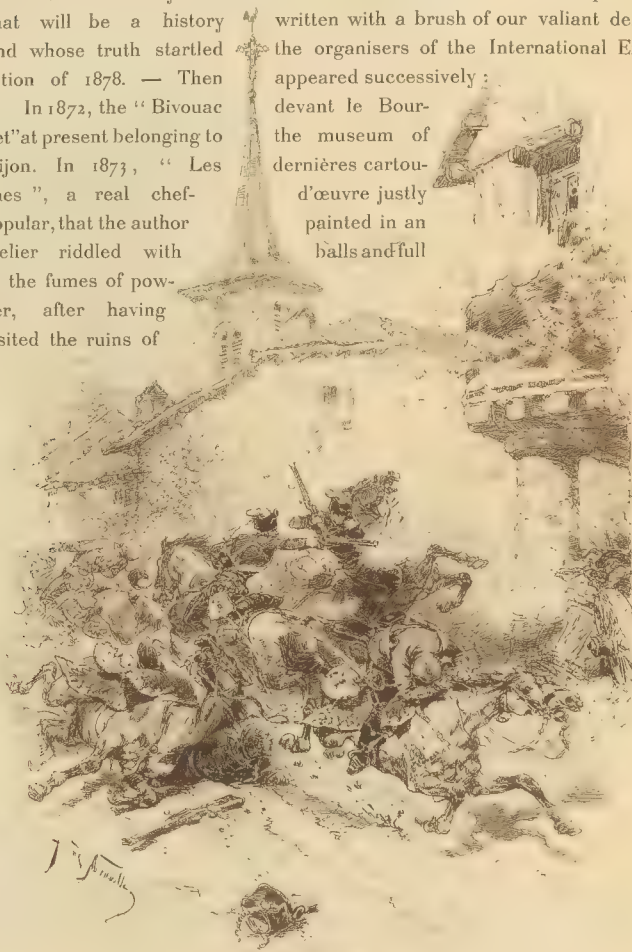


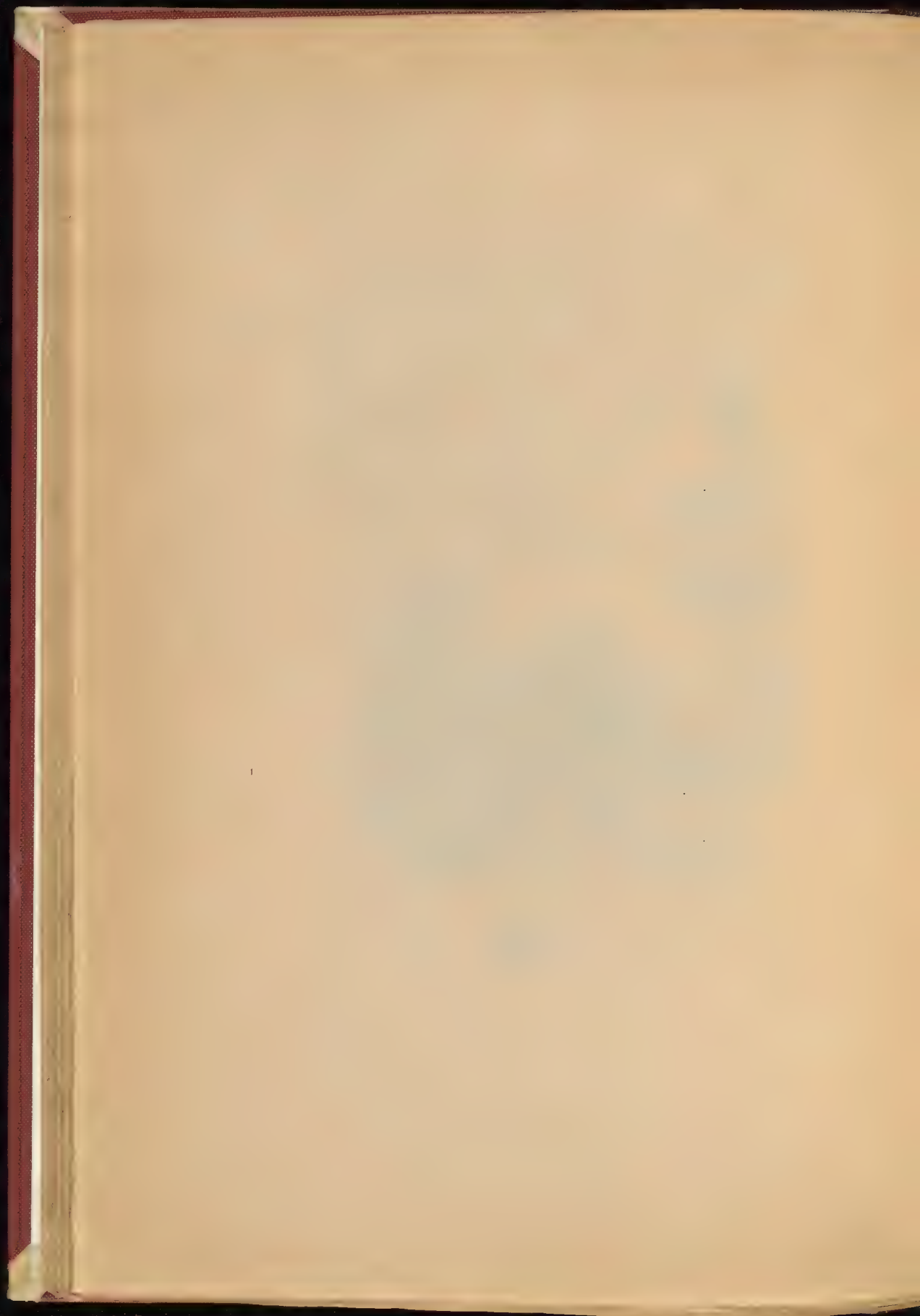
martyrs of a sacred cause had entered into his personality. It was a renewing of youth in his pictural conceptions, and in his execution.

It was effectively after this that he commenced that serie of pictures that will be a history written with a brush of our valiant defeat and whose truth startled the organisers of the International Exhibition of 1878. — Then appeared successively :

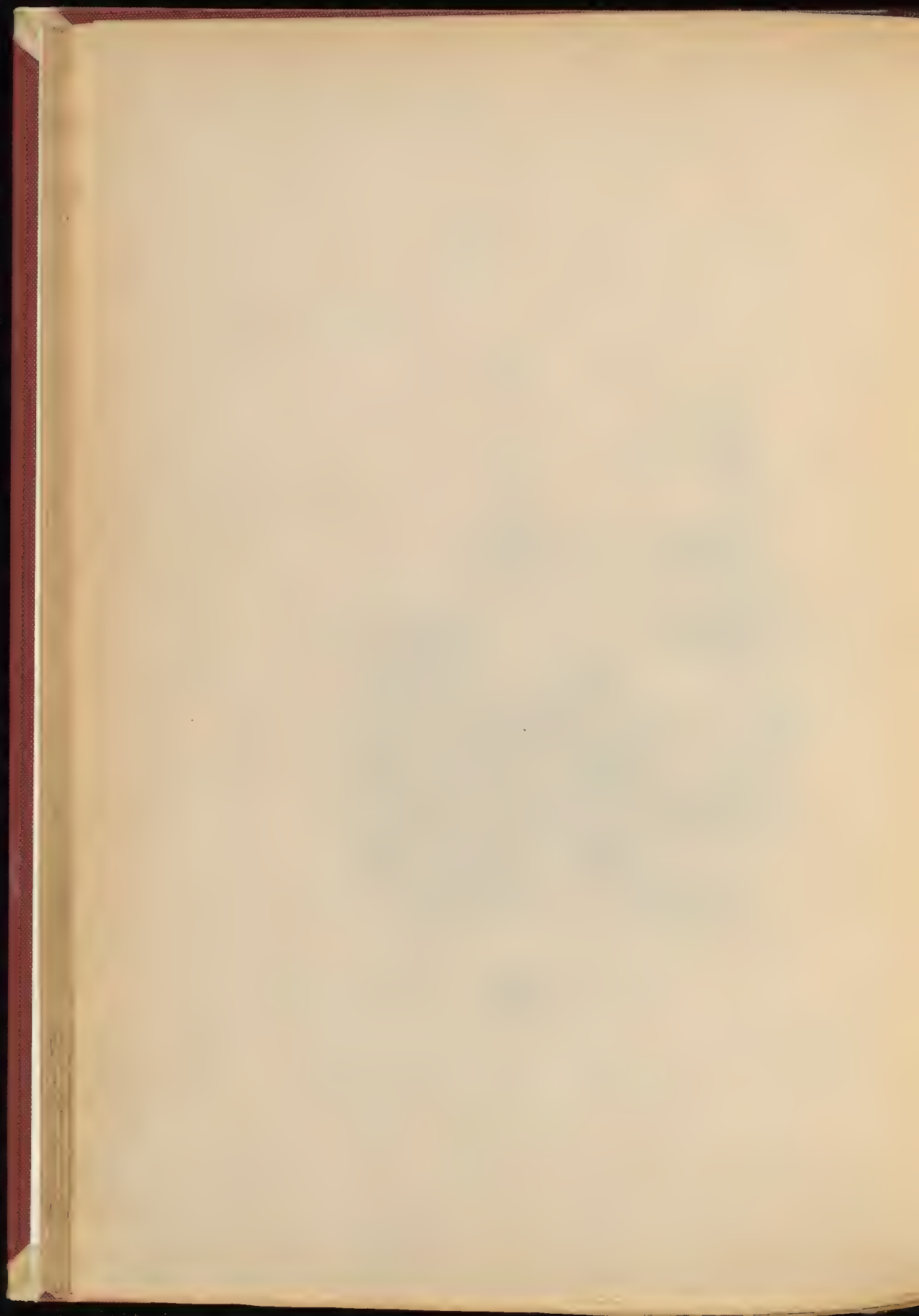
In 1872, the "Bivouac get" at present belonging to Dijon. In 1873, "Les ches", a real chef-popular, that the author atelier riddled with of the fumes of powder, after having visited the ruins of

devant le Bour-
the museum of
dernières cartou-
d'œuvre justly
painted in an
balls and full



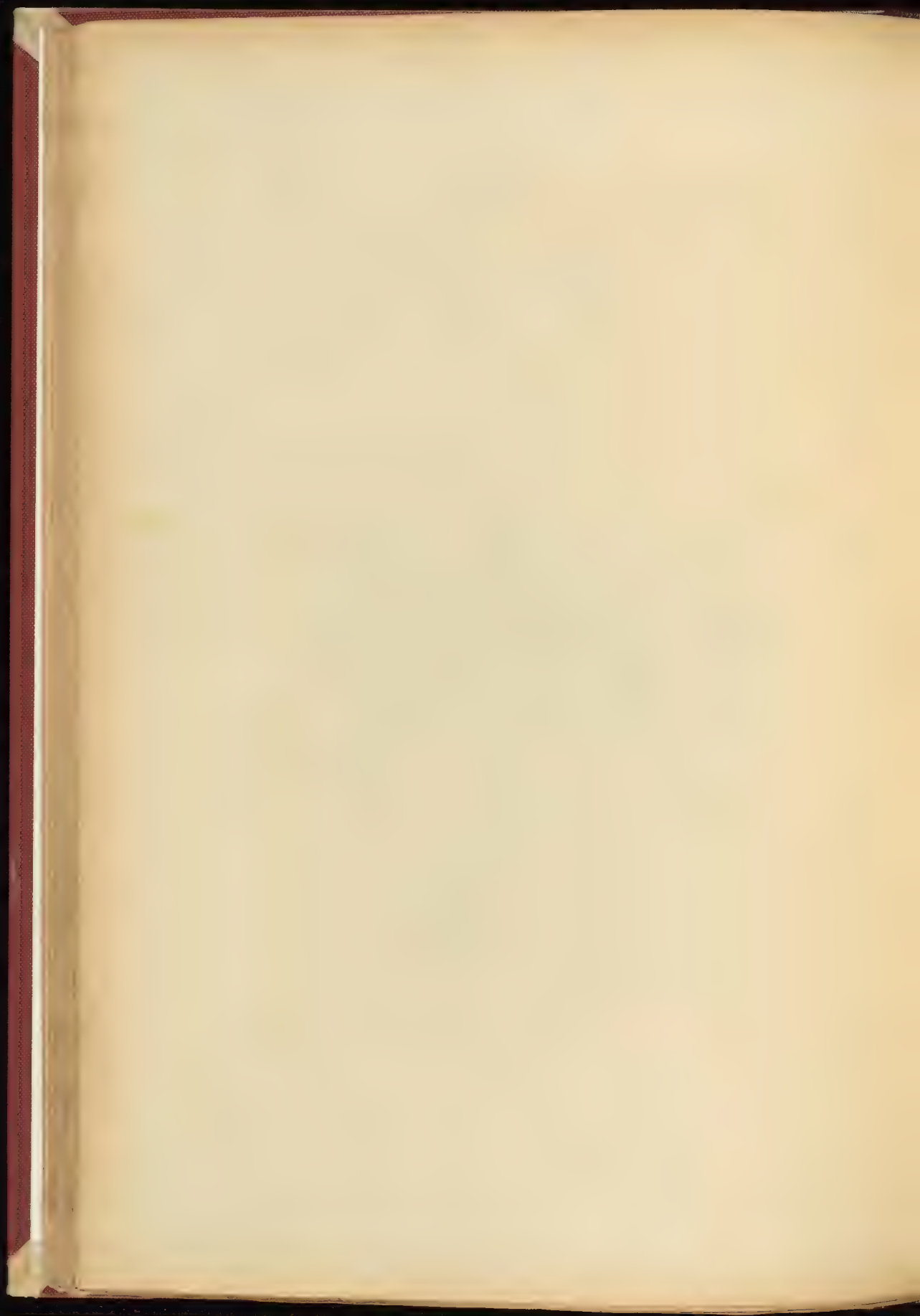


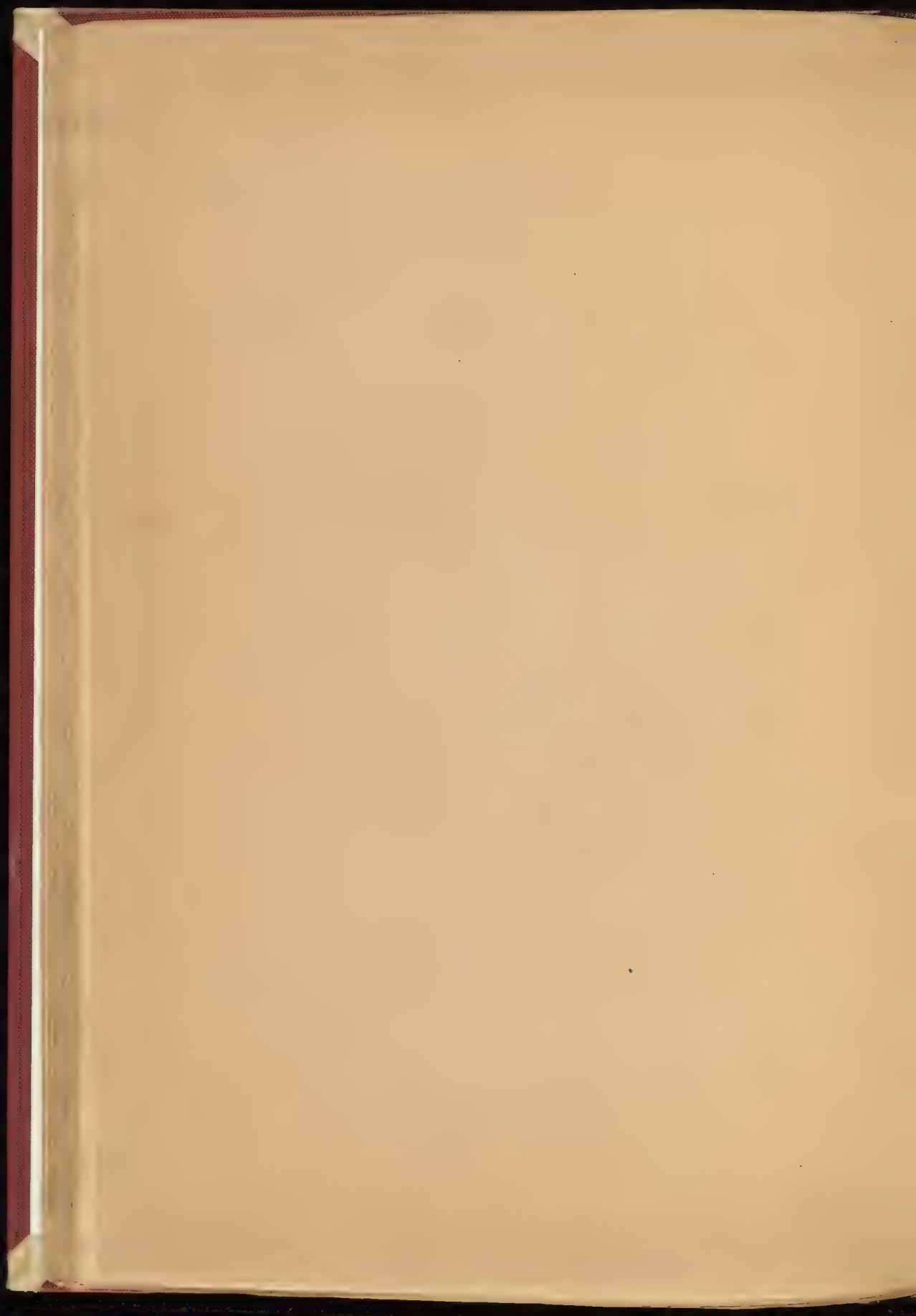






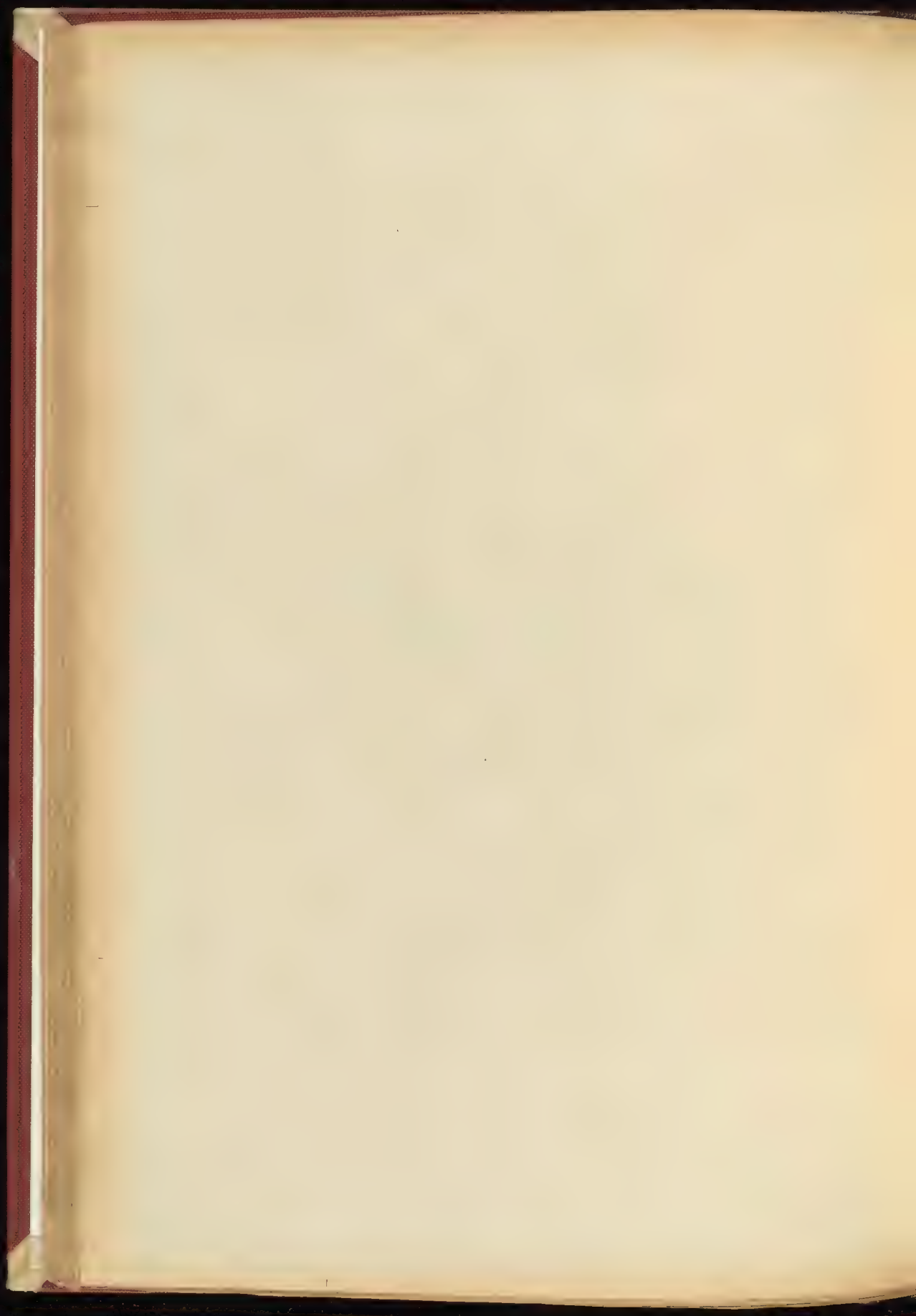
1870
1871







10/10/1914
J. J. J.



the house where this legendary combat took place, with one of the heroes who had taken part in it; and the "Combat sur la voie ferrée", which has also been frequently reproduced by different processes.

In 1874, "L'Attaque par le feu d'une maison barricadée à Villersexel."

In 1877, "La passerelle de la gare de Styring."

In 1878, "Le Bourget" and "Surprise au petit jour", one of the most picturesque and most ingenious among these fine compositions.

In 1880, "Le porteur de dépêches" and "Le cimetière de Saint-Privat", that all will remember, and that obtained for him the *croix d'officier de la Légion d'honneur*.

I would also cite, during the period that I have just passed over, several pictures that hold a considerable place among the works of de Neuville: "La tranchée", "Le Combat sur les toits", "Les Prisonniers prussiens dans l'église de Villersexel", the "Tirailleurs dans les genêts", the "Combat de la Malmaison". Two works absolute foreign to these military souvenirs, "La

Récolte des varechs" and "Le Cabestan", proved that his talent was not irrevocably enclosed in a certain order of subjects, and that he could attack all kinds with an equal surety and success. It is that de Neuville is not only a great military painter — but also a great landscapist. — The landscape in which he envelopes his scenes is not less interesting than the



scenes themselves. And this is intentional with him as I will explain presently, while developing his personal ideas.

It was in 1880 also that he painted for England an imposing episode of

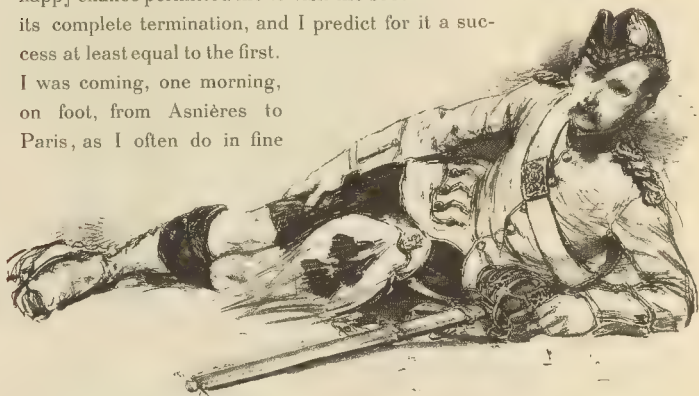


the Zouloulou war, "Rorke's-Drift". Another interesting picture also painted for our neighbor across the Channel was the "Assaut du camp de Tel-el-Kébir" by the Cronam brigade.

For the last three years, de Neuville has principally been devoted, in collaboration with his friend Detaille, to the composition of two large panoramas, of which one, that has been opened for some time, has obtained, rue

de Berri, an immense and continuous success. I only mention it as a memorandum, to those who have not seen it or only seen it imperfectly. A happy chance permitted me to visit the second before its complete termination, and I predict for it a success at least equal to the first.

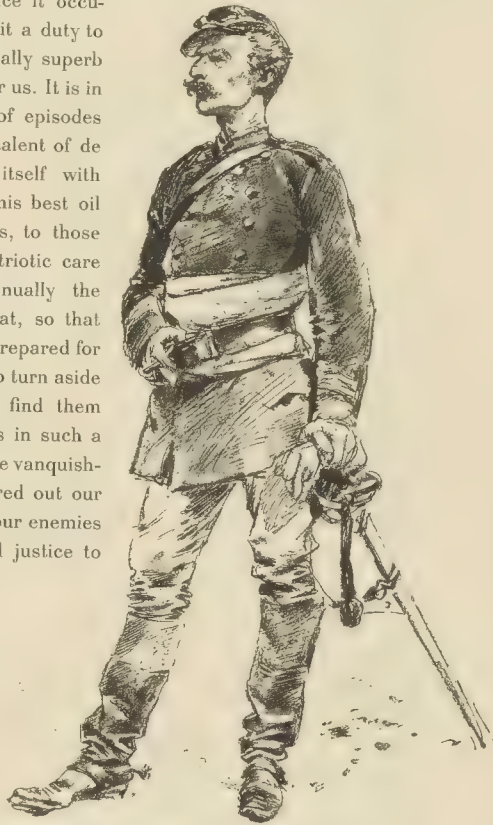
I was coming, one morning, on foot, from Asnières to Paris, as I often do in fine



weather, when near the *barrière*, I encountered de Neuville taking his morning walk. He led me into the immense wooden enclosure where his work was commenced. It represents "Le soir de Gravelotte", August 16th 1870,

rarely has it been given me to contemplate so moving a sight. The scene is largely developed, in a landscape so true that the different odors of nature seem to mount to where we were standing. I have much to say about panoramic art and the place it occupies at present. But I feel it a duty to add that these two are really superb works of art and a glory for us. It is in the variety and number of episodes that we find the dramatic talent of de Neuville, which shows itself with greater intensity than in his best oil pictures. I belong, besides, to those who believe that it is a patriotic care to bring before us continually the remembrance of our defeat, so that our hands may be better prepared for the future. I pity those who turn aside from these pictures and find them importunate. Forgetfulness in such a case is sacrilege. If we were vanquished by numbers, we poured out our blood so generously that our enemies themselves have rendered justice to our unfortunate courage.

History will have a great pity for that crushing of a people suddenly awakened from a dream of glory to find falling away from around them the legends of victorious defenses and a country defended against the invader. For myself, I am grateful to de Neuville that he has not yielded to the indifference of some and so abandoned an order of subjects where our virility should acquire renewed strength, in which we should find a bitter pleasure, until the day when that spot will be effaced



and we shall again become the most military people of Europe, that was our chief glory. For the rest it is well that strangers should know that we struggled to the end inspired in that by Virgil's fine lines :

Una salus victis nullam sperare salutem!

I have thus far only spoken of de Neuville as an historical painter and treating in oil military episodes. It now remains to speak of de Neuville as a water-colorist, and a water-colorist militant. If only to justify the title of these studies on a certain number of contemporary artists. I have heard

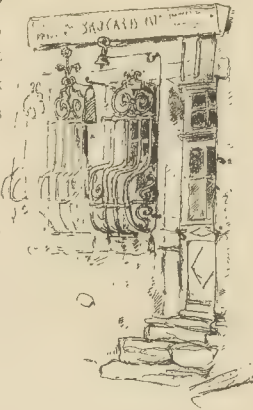


him explain his ideas upon this subject, and the reader will be interested in finding them here. In principle, de Neuville has a horror of the shiny tones of oils, and that which has drawn him so much towards panoramas is above all the research of dull tones which permit greater delicacy and aspects approaching infinitely nearer to the realities of nature. The same researches caused him to turn towards water-color painting, but also he understands it as comprehending all the processes by which this dullness of tone may be obtained, as an open field where the curiosities of execution may make a rendez-vous if the effect be arrived at. He does not restrict to the process of pure water-color such as were executed, for that matter, with a wonderful grace by the regretted Jacquemard. No, he admits pastels, gouache, every thing that complicates, if only something new is produced, something having

an unknown flavor. All audacities seem to him to be permissible if only they are justified by the result. This is the current that this sincere artist, in love with his profession, represents in the Société des Aquarellistes français and he has, besides, clearly expressed his opinion by his late exhibit at their exhibition, the studies, destined for the panorama of the "Soir de Gravelotte", that have been so sharply and passionately discussed. Although I am wanting in the authority to enter into a similar discussion, I would say that it applies, in reality, only to words. We have only to define the word aquarelle, not only in respect to its etymology, but according to the sense which it suggests to those who make use of it. It is a long time since I have believed that all the quarrels that divide poor humanity would have been instantly appeased if the folks who discussed would have commenced by agreeing upon the definition of the word in litigation. Three fourths of the time they do not agree because they are not talking of the same thing. This new example confirms my saying. What is necessary to know is if a water-colorist is a monsieur who paints exclusively with water under certain conditions, or if it is a monsieur who paints, simply not in oils. As to what is seemingly to do, I think that the artist who willingly limits his means of execution, makes a useless and ridiculous sacrifice. What difference does it make to the public who look at his work how the effect is obtained! Thus speaks de Neuville, and I think he is right.

He believes again that water-colors were not invented to treat figures with the extreme exhausting finish as some who make them but a motive for minutely painted stuffs, and interior scenes which might have been equally appropriate to oil painting. He considers, on the contrary, in water-colors, the landscape should occupy the principal place, the figures only appearing to give a motive to the decoration. We have seen that he always remains faithful to this conception which is, in reality, that of the panorama.

Searching in the immensity of nature her secrets, rendering them largely enveloped, with all possible truth, as in life our little actions are.

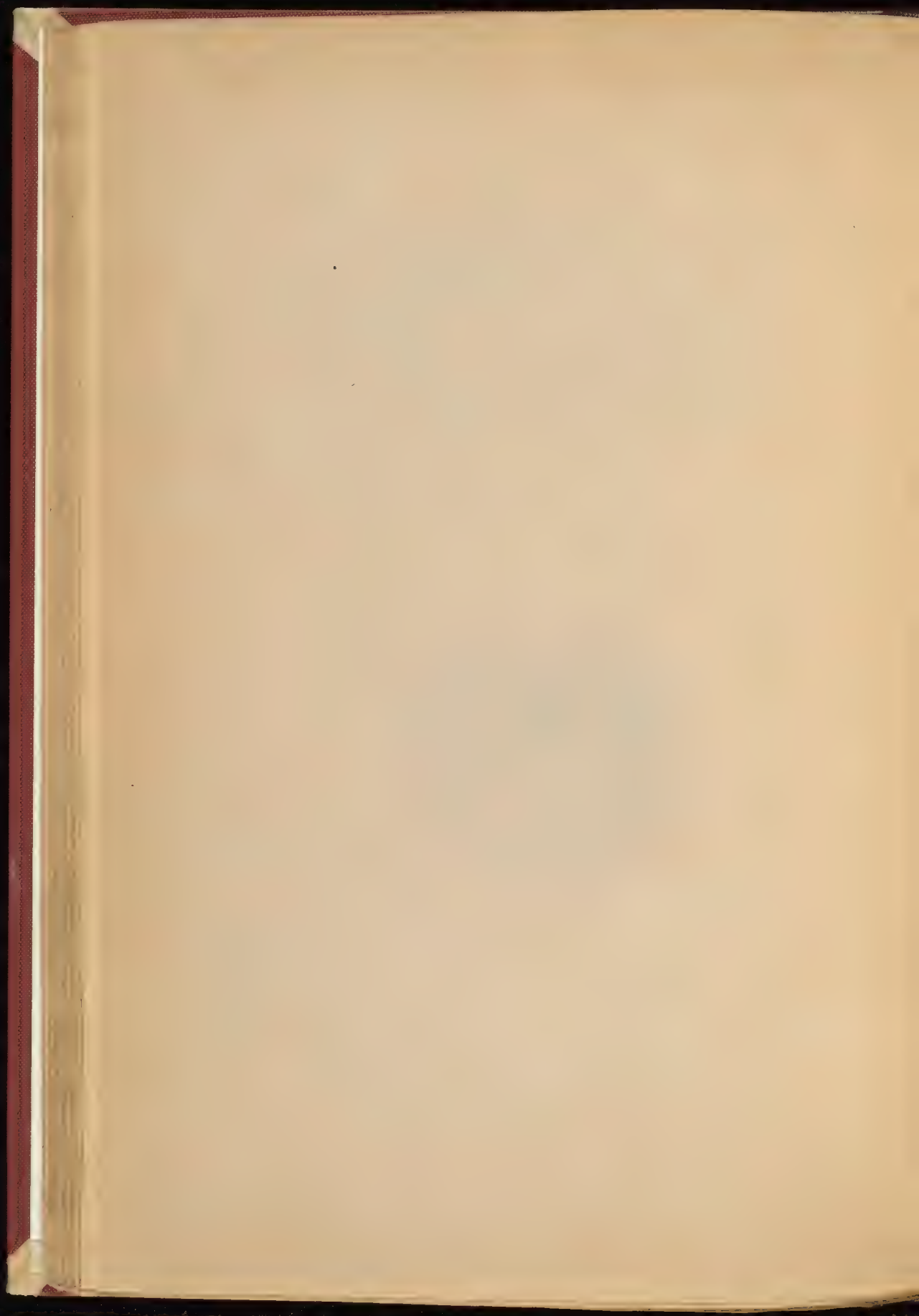


There is more than a pictural theory in this idea, there is an esthetic, and more a philosophic conception.

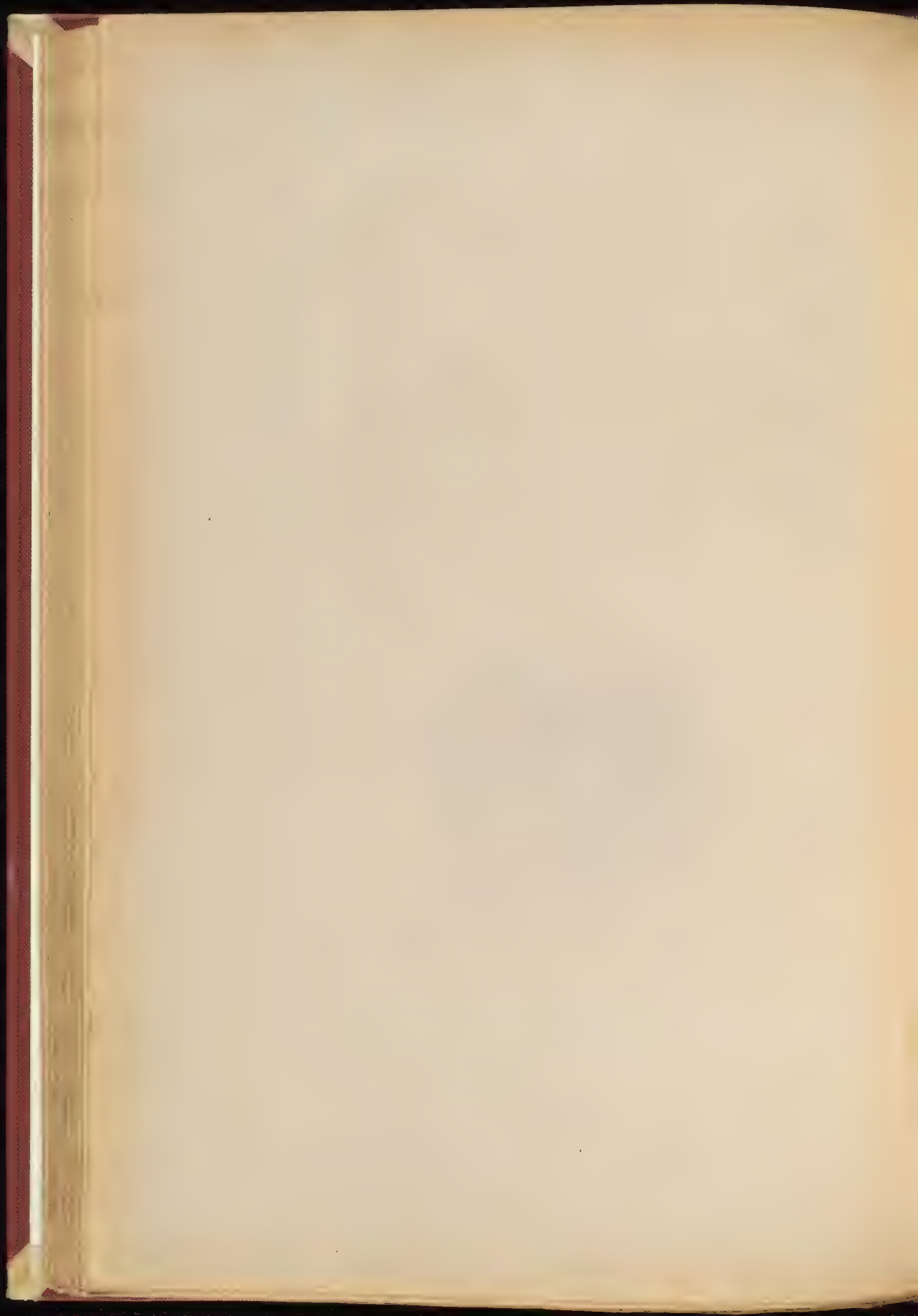
I have been tempted to reproduce, in this rapid study, one of the most lively and artistic physiognomies of the present time, a singularly attractive and sympathetic silhouette, a figure that commands esteem because it has the double prestige of conscience and talent. Still young, de Neuville has already accomplished a considerable work, showing solid qualities and a power of reproducing all that with which he is forcibly and fully impressed. This biography is in reality but a prologue of what he will one day merit, and has no other pretension than full sincerity in the praise and an absolute truth in its facts.

ARMAND SILVESTRE.

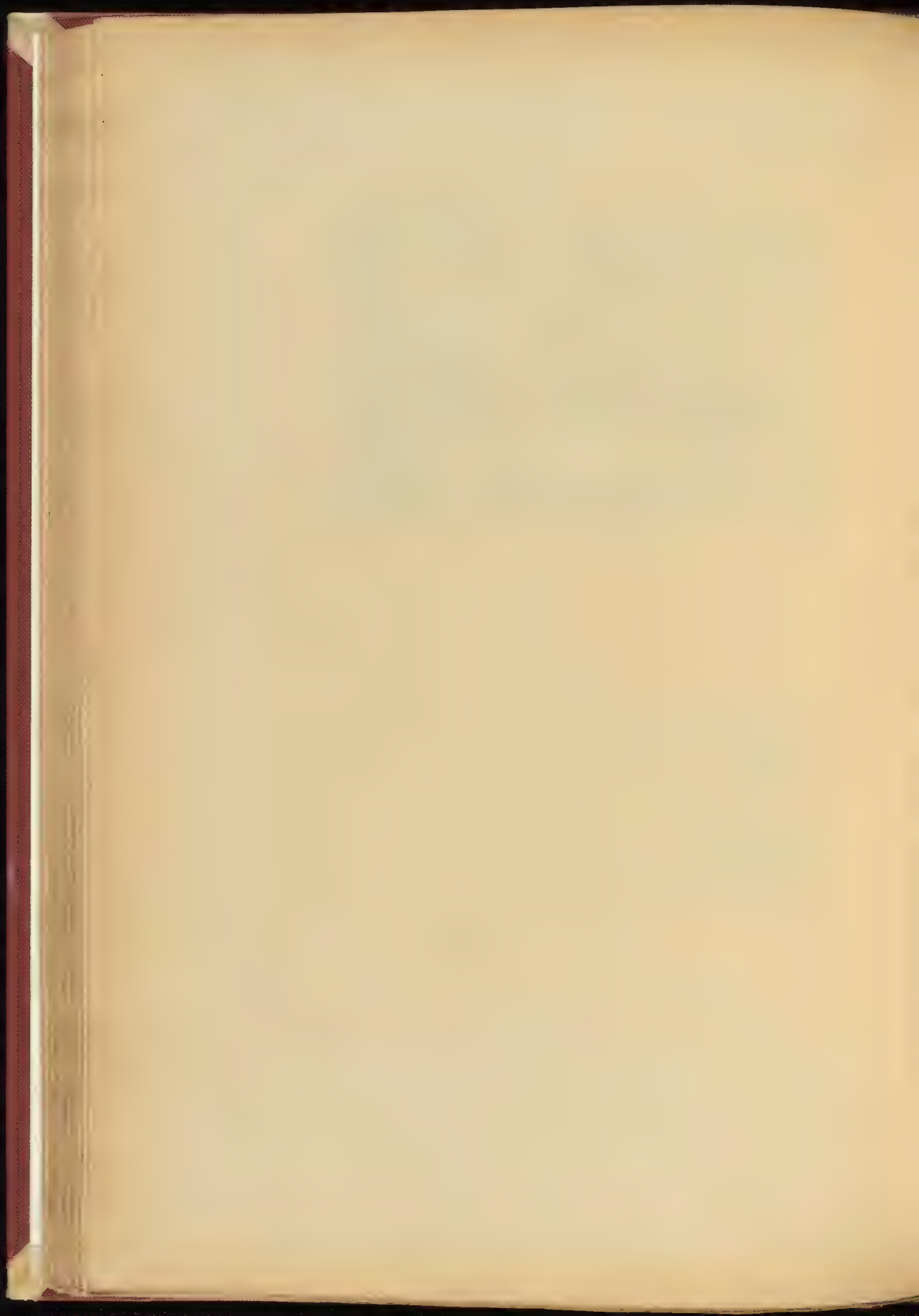




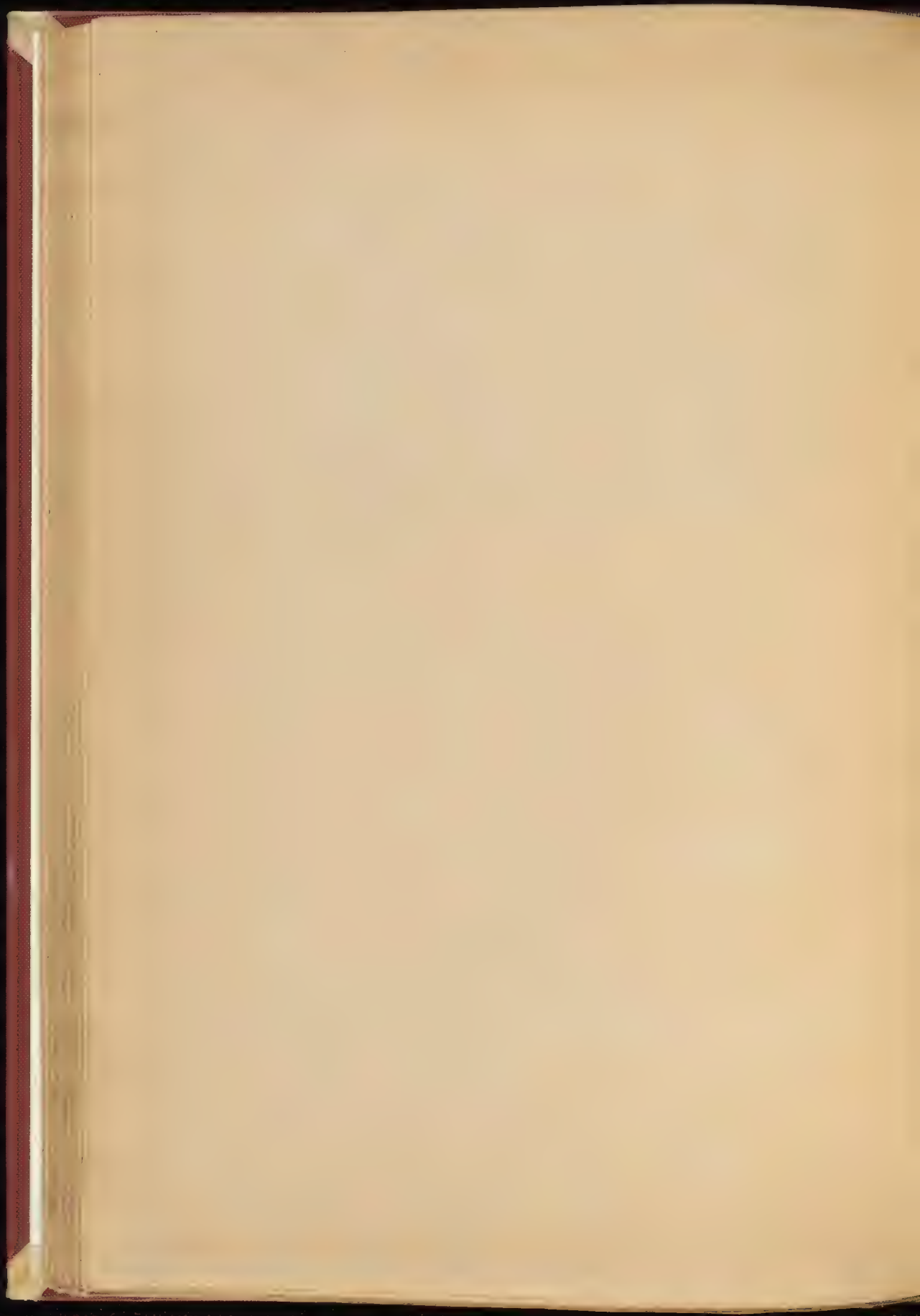














EUGÈNE LAMI



It is not a study, but a book that should be given to the works of Eugène Lami. His already long career has been well filled. Where was he born? And in what year? That is of but little importance as I do not intend to write an article for an encyclopedia. I know however that the time of the debut of M. Eugène Lami dates far back, for at the last international exhibition of paintings he said to me while pointing out the fine canvases of Robert-Fleury : " You might cite the author and I as having been together in the atelier of Gros." With Gros! does not that send us back into the far past? With Gros we think of David, Géricault, Gérard, Girodet, Prudhon, Charlet and Raffet; of all those that death has taken from us during the last twenty years, the stamp

of whose genius the art of painting misses so deeply. He grew up in this group of illustrious men and a love of painting took entire possession of him: "I also will be a painter", must often have flown to his lips from his heart, and in instinct, enthusiasm and devotion he is one. He had from the commencement the true and healthy tradition that consists in commencing by the beginning. He was always drawing, like one who learns the rudiments of a language before launching out into an unknown country. He practices the salutary gymnastic that the masters professed and taught. He leaves nothing to chance and depends entirely on study. In the streets, in society, at the theatre, he regards, observes, remembers and fixes on paper the results of his investigations. The gait, the attitude, the



expression of the passions of the human animal attracts him in the highest degree. He jots down at night, on entering his room the points that he has observed, absolutely as many relate with a pen from day to day the multitudinous events that have surprised the eye or the brain. His sketch-book of notes becomes an intimate journal where he unbosoms himself,

where he reconstructs with a few strange lines this or that scene that has attracted him. From this manner of working comes assuredly that superiority of drawing, arrangement and composition that amateurs recognise in M. Eugène Lami.

Before attempting painting he sought in the coarser and larger process of lithography the perfection that he could not attain in drawing. Then, from paper and stone he passed to canvas and colors to find there the secret of the absolute. Genre and historical subjects attracted him. However, he was terrified or influenced by his friends for at the Salon of 1834 he exposed some horses that had neighed in the stable where Géricault kept his, by way of compensation he also sent the "Combat de la Puerta de Miravente" where a glorious flame of heroism circulated.

In 1830, M. Eugène Lami was professor of drawing and water-color

painting to the Orléans princes. Then after a short time he escaped from court and commenced vagabonding, according to the caprice of his fancy. He went to Russia, Spain, Italy, England and Belgium always full of admiration, but never satiated. He was pursuing a dream, a chimera, an ideal. He wished that it might be inaccessible that he might taste the fierce voluptuousness of attaining it.



It is from this period's anxious study that date "Charles I^{er} recevant une rose en se rendant à sa prison"; un "Combat"; une "Mêlée dans la campagne du Balkan"; les "Manœuvres russes au sacre de Nicolas I^{er}"; l'"Attelage rustique"; "Course au

clocher"; "Un trait de bravoure moscovite".

It is impossible for me to follow in chronological order for, let me repeat, I do not wish to judge the painter except from his works and after his glorious campaigns, certainly not by conforming to the fashion of giving his social status with a description of his person. Art, in common with the heart in certain natures, has the quality of always remaining young. Viewed from this point, M. Eugène Lami is twenty-five years old. The most powerful witness to the truth of this assertion I can have is his flights of enthusiasm, his adoration for the sublime manifestations of the creed that he has embraced.

True artists are a touching sight, before chefs-d'œuvre they have the timidities, impressions, the pallidness and heart beatings that lovers have before the beauty that has enraptured them. It is not, I confess, one of my least pleasures: to associate with men who are often forgotten or disdained by the more modern-men who are pursuing ambitious intriguers. From these men, I learn what constitutes the dignity, respect and probity of art. A lesson that cannot be too often repeated.



But to return to M. Eugène Lami I will terminate the list of his pictures so as to arrive at his numerous and various water-colors. First mentioning certain portraits; after them the "Bataille de Cassani"; the "Prise de

Maëstricht"; the "Combat de Claves"; the "Combat de Wattignies"; the "Capitulation d'Anvers"; the "Attentat de Fieschi"; the "Bataille de l'Alma"; and finally the "Combat de Hondschoote" in the museum at Lille the landscape having been painted by Jules Dupré.

It was after the fall of Louis-Philippe in 1848, that M. Eugène Lami left for England with Gavarni. A long time before he had made a short visit but this time he went to remain for several years, submitting to the salutary influence of Bonington and devoting himself entirely to water-colors which he has never since abandoned. His initiation to english life was rapidly made for he possesses that vivacity of wit, that quietness of temperament that

sort of scepticism that the pedants call philosophy and which permits one to be at home everywhere. Gavarni quite the opposite, with a character inclined to bitterness, and that impression of coldness that the study of mathematics had imparted to him, struggled in the midst of the fogs and spleen like a devil in a holy water font. As the first was sparkling so the

second was morose. So whilst M. Eugène Lami who had been introduced in the best english society received lavish hospitality in their country houses, Gavarni strolled about the streets, and penetrated the poorest and least cared for parts of the town seeking there those unforgettable types that seem to have been detached from Hogarth's album.



It was during the stay of M. Eugène Lami at the house of a prominent lord that the following adventure occurred: Installed in the large dining-room he was drawing the monumental chimney-piece when the hostess followed by a quietly dressed lady of severe aspect approached our artist. He put aside his work, conversation commenced on the events then passing in



France. Lamartine had just published "Les Girondins". Very naturally, this book became the pivot of the talk M. Eugène Lami defended; the unknown visitor, who spoke french without an accent, attacking it vehemently behind her the mistress of the house uselessly attempted by an exaggerated pantomime to smooth matters; such was the tableau when the talk becoming rather heated the lady of the house advanced towards M. Eugène Lami and said simply : "The Queen". The Queen smiled, offered her hand to the painter and then left.

French art has been entirely modified during these later years. The



literature by which it was formerly inspired has been abandoned and it is from nature and above all from modernity that our artists at present demand inspiration. Surely, I do not blame them for this craving after something novel, for such a thirst for sensational emotions. The generations growing up around and that will follow us will consider these senti-

ments as nextdoor to necessity. We may however be allowed to affirm that, the masters of some forty years ago who have left such magnificent examples of the excellence of a process today surpassed, these manifestations will be perpetuated farther in the coming ages than they seem to surmise. The painters as well as sculptors formed an integral party with the poets, the novelists and the historians. They espoused the lyricism of some, the ingeniousness of others, the severity of traditions. They attempted to bring to life on the canvas or in marble all the dazzling fairy scenes, all those romantic and tragic situations, all those episodes that recall the prototypes of a nation's greatness. They were like translators of the

beauties of aureola's ideal of chimeral struggles with the prosaic forms of historical truths.

M. Eugène Lami being very literary, much absorbed in the ideas of his time, intimate with poets and writers, familiar with the illustrious ancients whose works, he has almost by heart, promised himself to render tangible their strophes. And so commenced that wonderful series of water-colors



where the grandeur of Shakespeare, the euphony of Byron and the profundity of Goethe, the imagination at once sublime and unhealthy of de Musset were all reproduced with the brilliancy, movement, color and expression of the originals. He not only expresses what these geniuses have written. He composes after them as a sort of co-worker that goes higher and pushes farther than these that he wishes to make felt.

In the marvelous task where the writers thought planes above unlimited horizons, because the extent is only limited by his caprice or fancy M. Eugène Lami find himself at ease. He creates the epoch side by side with the personages. And then he has the magic brush of a colorist! The brush that can at will render the suavity of ideal day-dawns, the superhuman devotedness of heroism, the frightfulness of bloody horrors. He expresses the grace, tenderness, modesty and supreme horror. He also has largeness of phrasing, and if he attacks Molière it is that he may be better appreciated.



In a serie of thirty-two water-colors, he has succeeded in giving the immortal types of Poquelin, giving to the valets and attendants a knavery and laughter that seems to descend from Olympus; to the blushing maids and their gallant lovers, the elegant lords and the ladies, who seemed to have but just arrived from the hotel of Rambouillet a breath of humanity that seems to circulate around the types, placing them at ease, crushing or raising them. And with what ability all these

personages are arranged! What ingenious turns the painter has given to the garments, the creases in a bow, the shading of the headdress, the insolence of a sword beating about tender calves. All this is the diabolical wit of an artist enamoured with a chivalrous and gallant period lightly touching with his brush the corner of a reign; and what a corner! what a reign!

Now that I have made a synthesis of the talent of M. Eugène Lami, I can mention some of his water-colors. Those of which I am going to speak might resume them. They touch the historical, actual and even caricatural. I have had the rare chance to admire them at M. Hartmann's an amateur by birth and the remembrance of my visit will not soon be effaced.



A page from English history inspired the first: the young queen Marie Stuart, in Scotland, condemned to listen to the preaching of Knox, a fanatical follower of Calvin, who had been imprisoned for having killed a bishop. The composition is superb. It is in a low ceilinged hall with arched colonnades, in a feudal castle, where the sermon was delivered. Under a red dais, placed on the left the young and unfortunate queen listens, pensive and almost terrified.

She is dressed in black velvet, with a gold cross at her throat. Maids of honor surround her. In the foreground at the right, men at arms, a bishop and gentlemen. On a low chair a Scotchman dressed in purple with a long sword at his side. In the distance fierce protestants, in the attitude of judges, — birds of prey ready to swoop down on this dove. The antagonistic feeling of the representants of the two creeds is very well expressed. The breath of the "Colloque de Poissy" might have passed over this page.

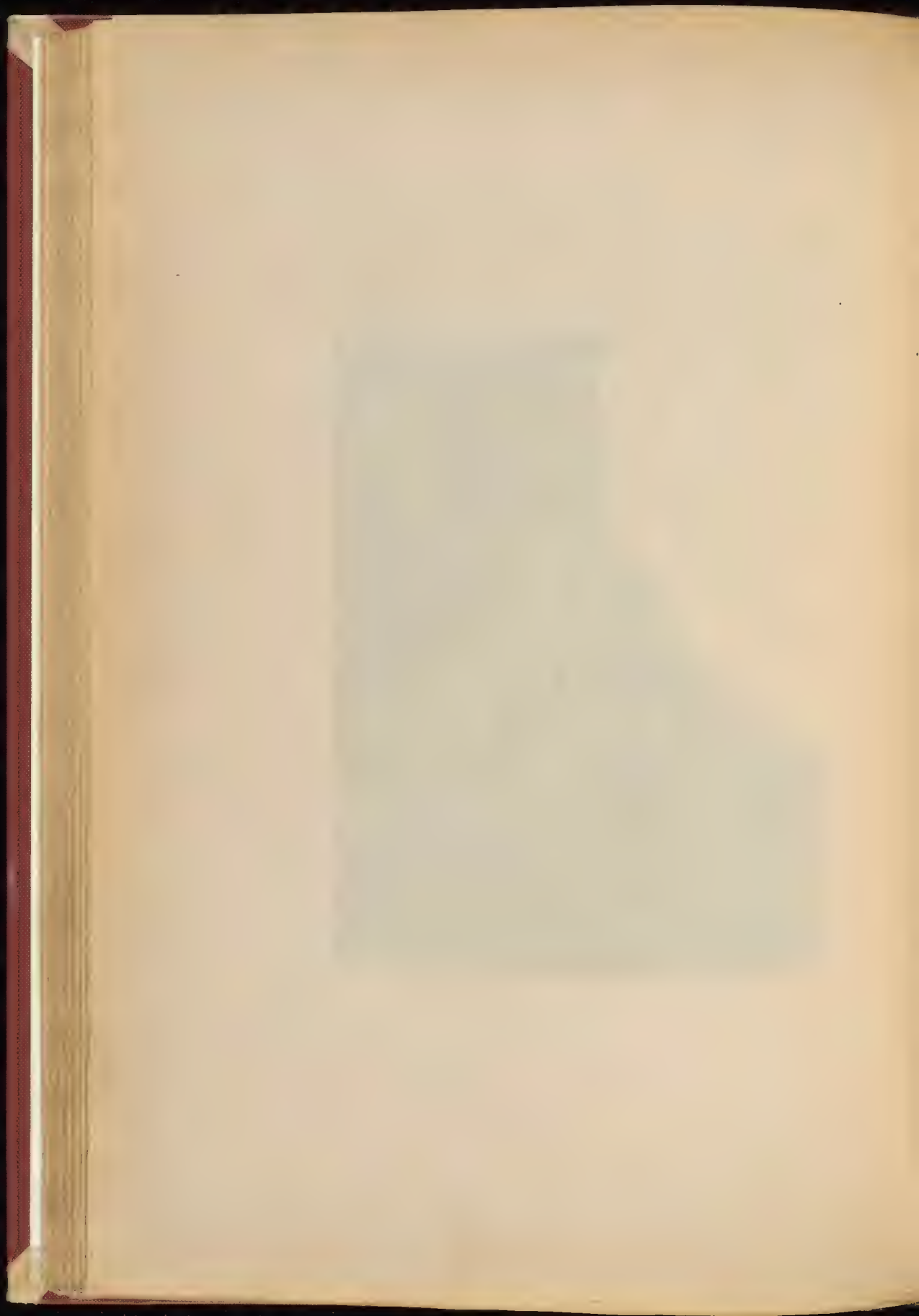
The second water color that I saw represents Shakespeare's "Cléopâtre", when she receives Cesar's visit: "Elle était couchée sur un petit lit bas, en bien pauvre état; mais, sitôt qu'elle le vit entrer en sa chambre, elle se leva soudain et s'alla jeter toute nue en chemise à ses pieds, étant merveilleusement défigurée, tant pour ses cheveux qu'elle avait arrachés que

pour la face qu'elle avait déchirée avec ses ongles; elle avait la voix faible et tremblante, les yeux battus à force de larmoyer continuellement, aussi pouvait-on voir la plus grande partie de son estomac déchiré et meurtri."

M. Eugène Lami has chosen the moment when Cleopatra overwhelmed by the death of Anthony receives, spread out on a divan, the visit of Cesar

accompanied by Gallus, Proculeius, Mécène, Séleucus and other personages of the conqueror's suite. Fallen at the foot of the divan, jewels are heaped together on the floor, amphoras, and vases: the queen's ransom. Behind Cesar is seen flags, trophies all that victory brings in her train. It is a fascinating mass of brilliant stuffs, plumes framing in this uncontested catastrophe.

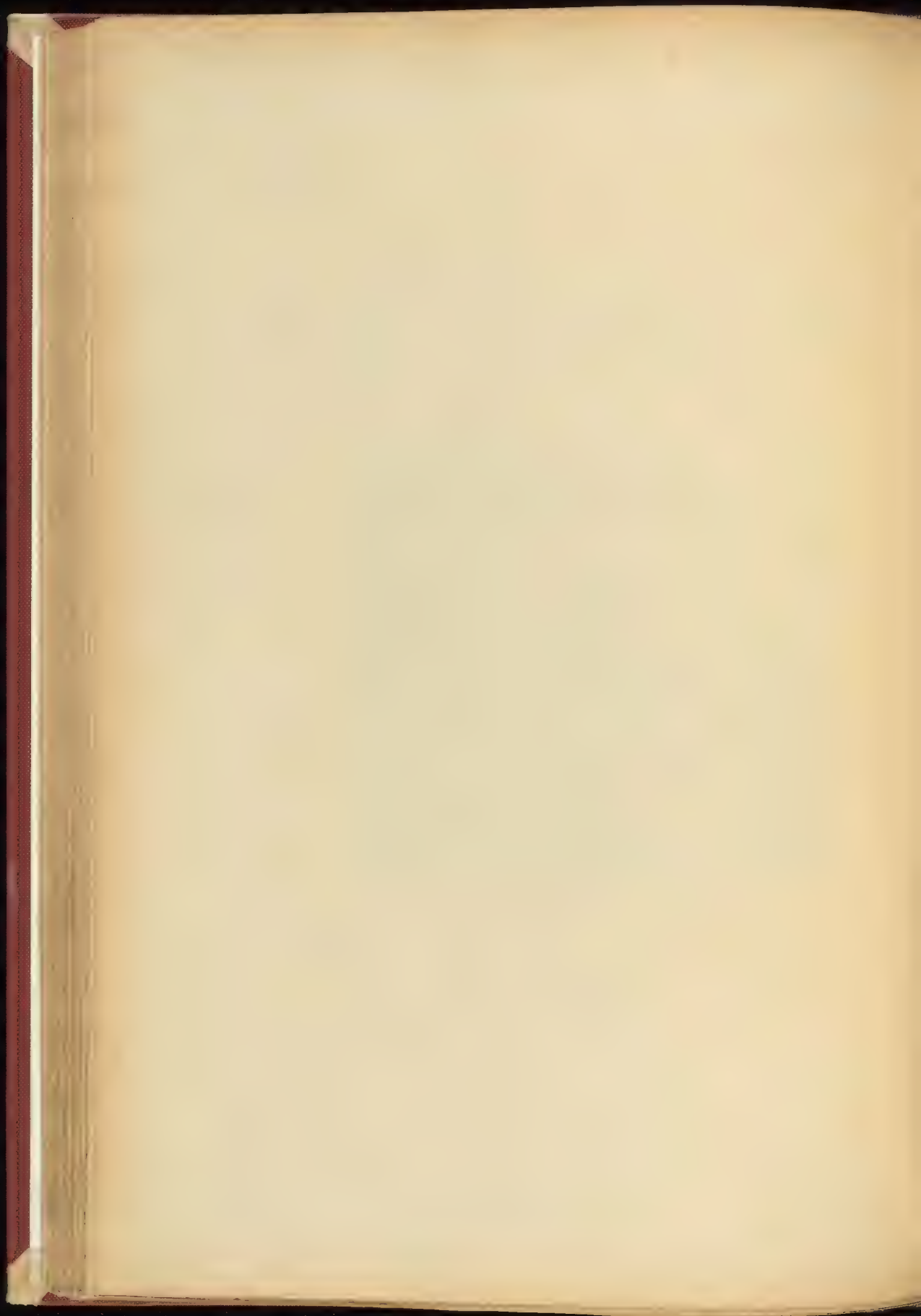


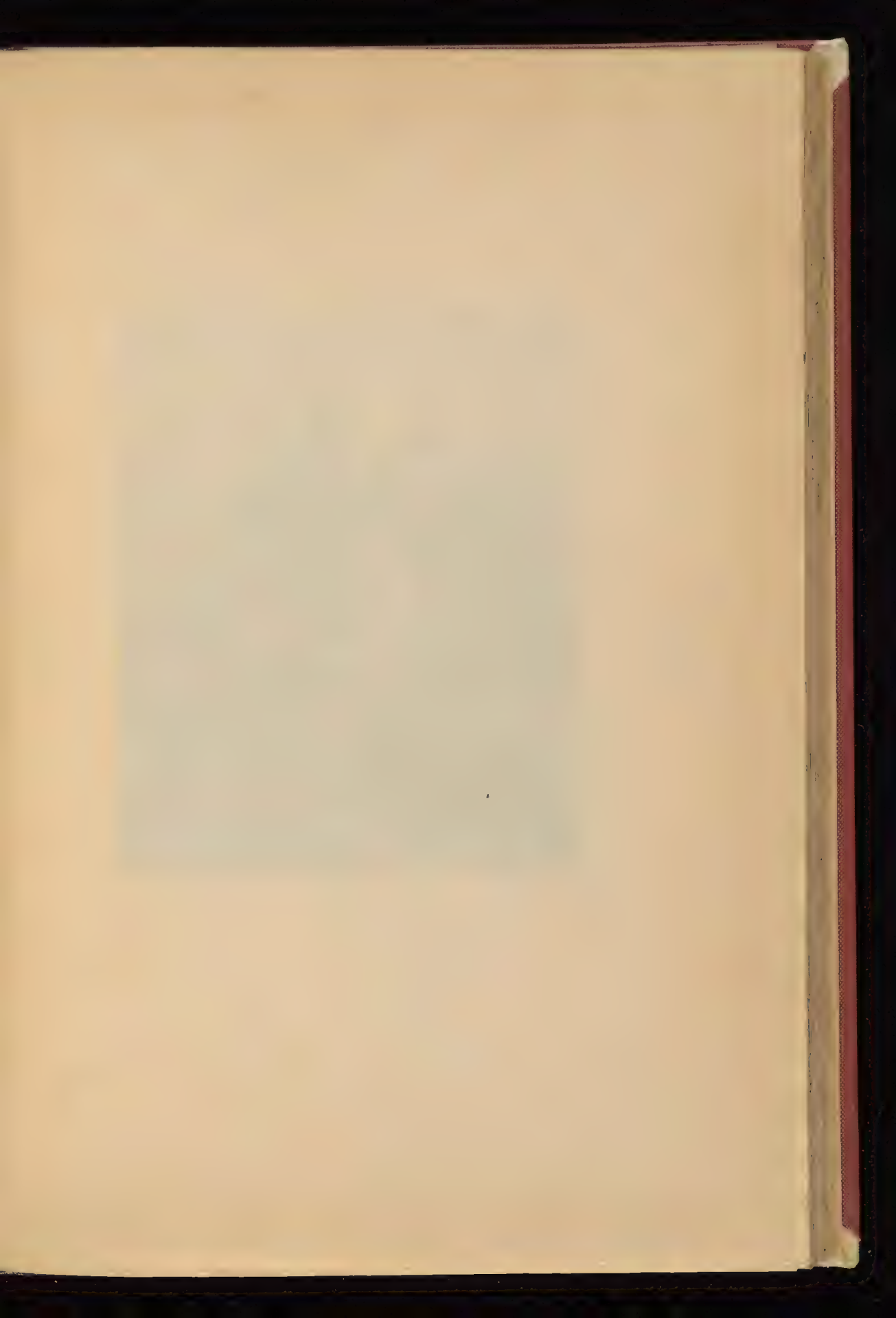


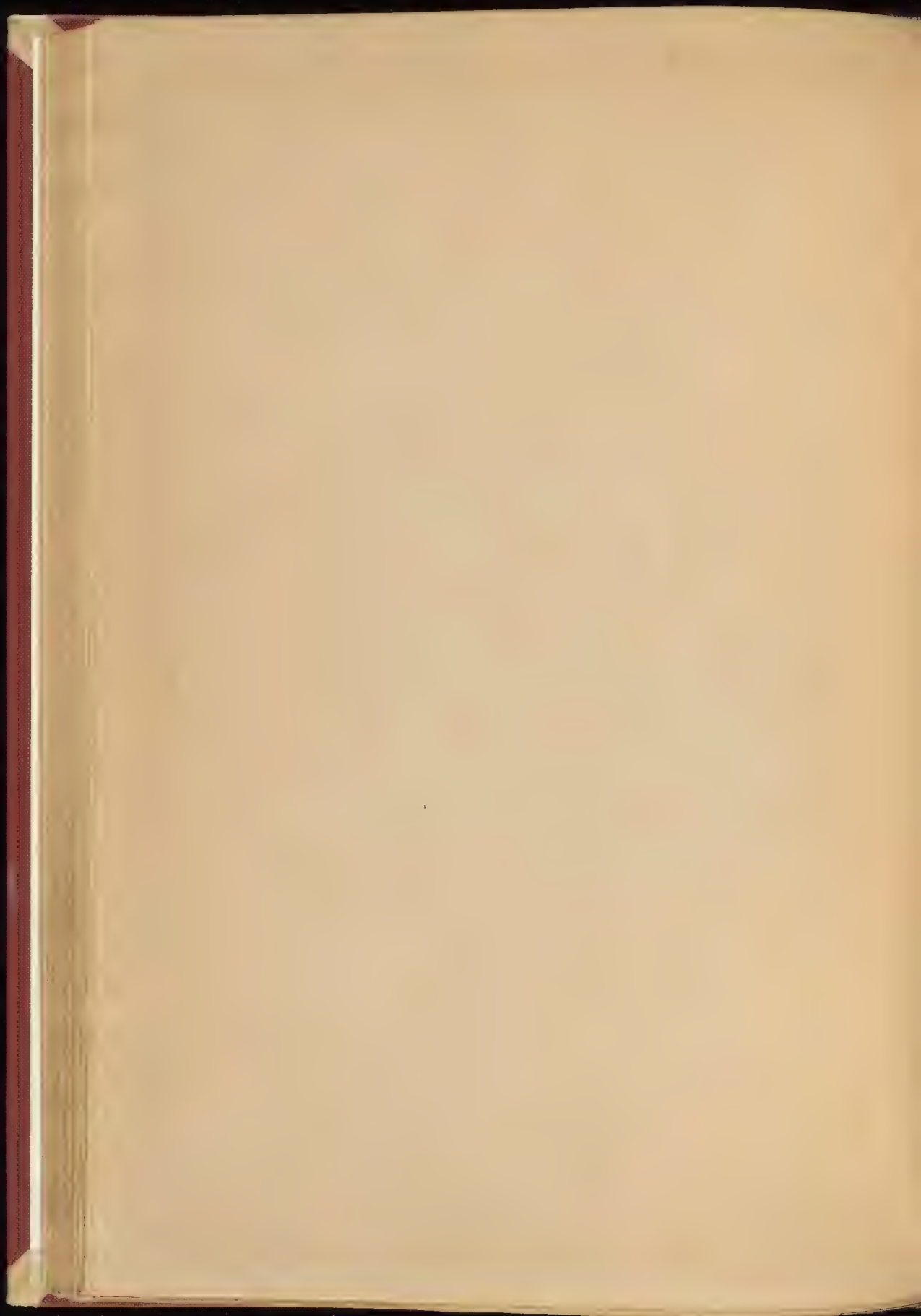




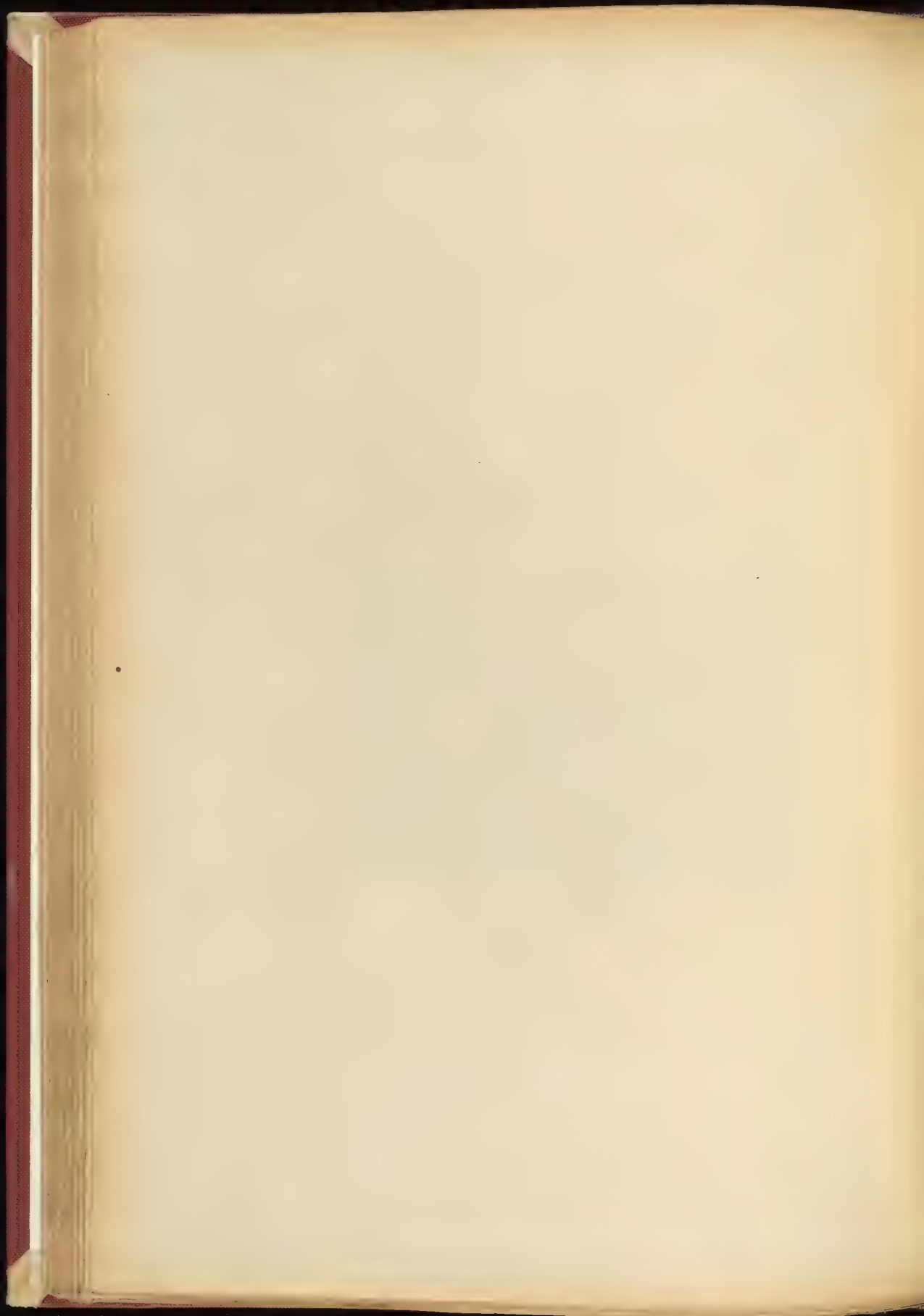












The painter has shown however, in Cesar the man whose first word to Cleopatra is this: "Arise, you shall not kneel, I pray you, rise! rise, Egypt!"

"Les Huguenots" have also been treated by M. Eugène Lami. He has made several water-colors after this opera. "*La bénédiction des poignards*" is very effective. Monks furiously descending the steps of a monumental staircase guarded by halberdiers. Other monks, fanatically, belting on the arms that the catholic nobles are delivering to them. It is the massacre being arranged before the dotting eyes of Valentine, you feel that Raoul is lost. We seem to hear mounting the powerful music of Meyerbeer in this scene where the figures, the groups, the grand whole seem to have assumed the proportions of an historical picture.



"Henri IV chevauchant avec Mme de Chantal", abbess of Vanves, belonging to the "*Drames de la Ligue*" of Vitet. The king vert-galant is riding at random when he meets the abbess. He greets her with: "I met you, mother, it is already a long times since. — Yes, I was then eighteen. — You have spoken to a huguenot, you will be burned. — Ah! well, a fagot more or less, what matters it."



It is exquisitely arranged and spirited in feeling. One sees the two riders in the perspective of time, and when no longer seen, they affect us as being there, thus losing ourselves in the painters dream. And what a colorist! How well he mingles the tones

and plays with contrasts. The white horse of the king and the nun's darker one harmonise with the landscape that claims our admiration.

A chapter from "*Ivanhoé*", l'enlèvement, that Delacroix has also created, is a masterly piece.

All these water-colors of which I have tried to give an idea, belong to

M. Hartmann. He has others the subjects of which are modern, some of which are satires and others critiques penetrated with a touch of philosophy. Before going farther I will cite a "Hamlet revenant de tuer Polonius" which is vibrating in expression. The prince by his mother's advice has just made a sword thrust through the tapestry by which he was concealed. He has dragged the body near to the adulterous spouse, now speaking to it and then addressing his mother: "Toi, misérable impudent, indiscret imbécile, adieu! Je t'ai pris pour un plus grand que toi, subis ton sort. Tu sais maintenant que l'excès de zèle a son danger."



maintenant que l'excès de zèle a son danger."

To his mother:

"Cessez de vous tordre les mains. Silence! Asseyez-vous, que je vous torde le cœur! Oui, j'y parviendrai s'il n'est pas d'une étoffe impénétrable, et si l'habitude du crime ne l'a pas bronzé et rendu inaccessible au sentiment."

It is not a common place mind that attempts rendering poems of such an order. To make palpitate on canvas or on paper human passions, to move or frighten with the dramas of a barbarous epoch, to represent the intensity and the life, implies a nature largely open to the beauties of a book or the allurements of verse. It requires science and at the same time pathos; that which is grave and that which is humorous, judiciousness and foolishness these things difficult to bring together, these personal creations that make an artist some one in the crowd where Ulysses might repeat his saying to Polyphem, for all the world there is: some one.

It is because M. Eugène Lami seems to me to resume the ideal of an artist that I have attempted to show him in full in his works, allowing designedly the man to be absorbed in the worker sure to meet on our

route a being always enamored with chimeras and dreams advancing with the same pace towards relative truth and towards the truth of poets, the only one that if it does cause some deceptions, never produces vexation.

Just now I allowed it to be understood that M. Eugène Lami had also painted episodes of his own times; I am now coming to them. Under this head he has been complex and diverse, having at the same time the lofty brush of a Gavarni and the sarcastic point of a Grandville. He belongs to all sets, that is to say he is familiar with the aristocracy of



descent, of talent and of fortune, he has told of elegancies as a Dorsay might and ridicules them like a Chodruc-Duclos.



This slender piquant brush, full of grace and humour, has shown us a corner of english life : a landau at a palace door, perched on the box with his gold corded three cornered hat and blue and white livery sits the coachman holding in the horses who are pawing the ground, at the carriage door a footman, to the left the gay shades of Hyde Park; and a "Sortie d'église à Lausanne", letting escape a white cloud of nuns carrying their banner in its golden case. Two pages very different forming the antithesis between luxury and devotion, between gay life as led by our neighbors and the elevation of sacrifice ; two water-colors where the marvelous and personal qualities of the painter are shown and that makes it difficult to establish comparisons.

"Un équipage du prince Demidoff" underlines and shows precisely what was high life in 1836. The carriage drawn by handsome chestnut horses is seen coming out of the park of a castle, the crest of the trees being seen over

the walls. The form of the carriage, the taste of the harness, the good style of the footmen throws a curious light on the manners and on the stiff luxury, though without causing reproach to the "lions" of Louis-Philippe reign.

"Le Mariage de raison", dates from 1832, is amusing as a memorialists page might be. Love does not admit of dates: "Il est de toutes les saisons" if we may believe the old song. It is the only sentiment that is not lessened or forgotten.

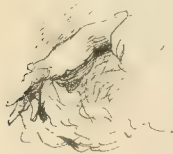
Often it is blamed this poor Eros, it is scoffed at tired out but it comes back from its griefs and tears. The painter presents to us a pretty girl, pretty as all young, pure girls are, full of illusions who is about to be affianced to an old dry, affectedly grave man who has exhausted youthful enthusiasms; she is seated in an arm chair between her mother and another chaperon, knowing the wishes of her father who is pacing up and down the drawing-room with his hands in his pockets and his legs bent as if he were on the deck of a ship. And beyond, sacrificed by the father, the discarded lover who runs his hands feverishly through his disordered hair, trying to dissimulate his beating heart?



true, with a relentless date. Is it in truth the love dreamed of.

"Une Noce à Divone" forms an ingenious opposition with the "Mariage de raison." I do not know if the married couple are well matched, but

they make so much uproar their happiness bursts out in such flourishes of trumpets, of flowers and wreaths that the sound of their voices is lost in the tumult. It is a holiday in the village, with horsemen, groupes in bright dresses decorated with ribbons that have arrived on foot; the little church is seen at the left, in the back ground mountains, in the distance a forest so hospitable to young romantic people where the wolf is always to be found.



A lovely landscape unfolds its charms before the fascinated gaze, a soft grey mysteriously envelops and bathes this scene with its unprejudiced kisses.

The variety and number of water-colors of M. Eugène Lami is astonishing, they pass from grave to gay, from severe to ludicrous without loss of spirit or fatigue in handling.

Daumier could not have expressed it more powerfully than he has in the "Deux contrastes". One, the burial of a village notable, with official personages, the firemen, a crowd of mourners and a numerous and imposing clergy; and the other the burying of a poor wretch. The gravedigger who carries distractedly the coffin on his shoulders towards the pauper's corner, the unfortunate who leaves for the great unknown, without even the dog of Vigneron's "l'Enterrement du pauvre". The antithesis is the more striking as the



landscape is full of brightness, with a picturesque horizon, nature is clement to all, nature the *alma parens* is prolific, it being more easy to reach equality in death than to overcome life's inequalities.



I have just pointed out one of the particular features, not of the art but of the imagination of M. Eugène Lami which, judged by his works, is at once curious and delicate. He mixes a thought with his conceptions so perfectly that one cannot but remember it, it seems as if, in reading, his heart had passed into his palette.

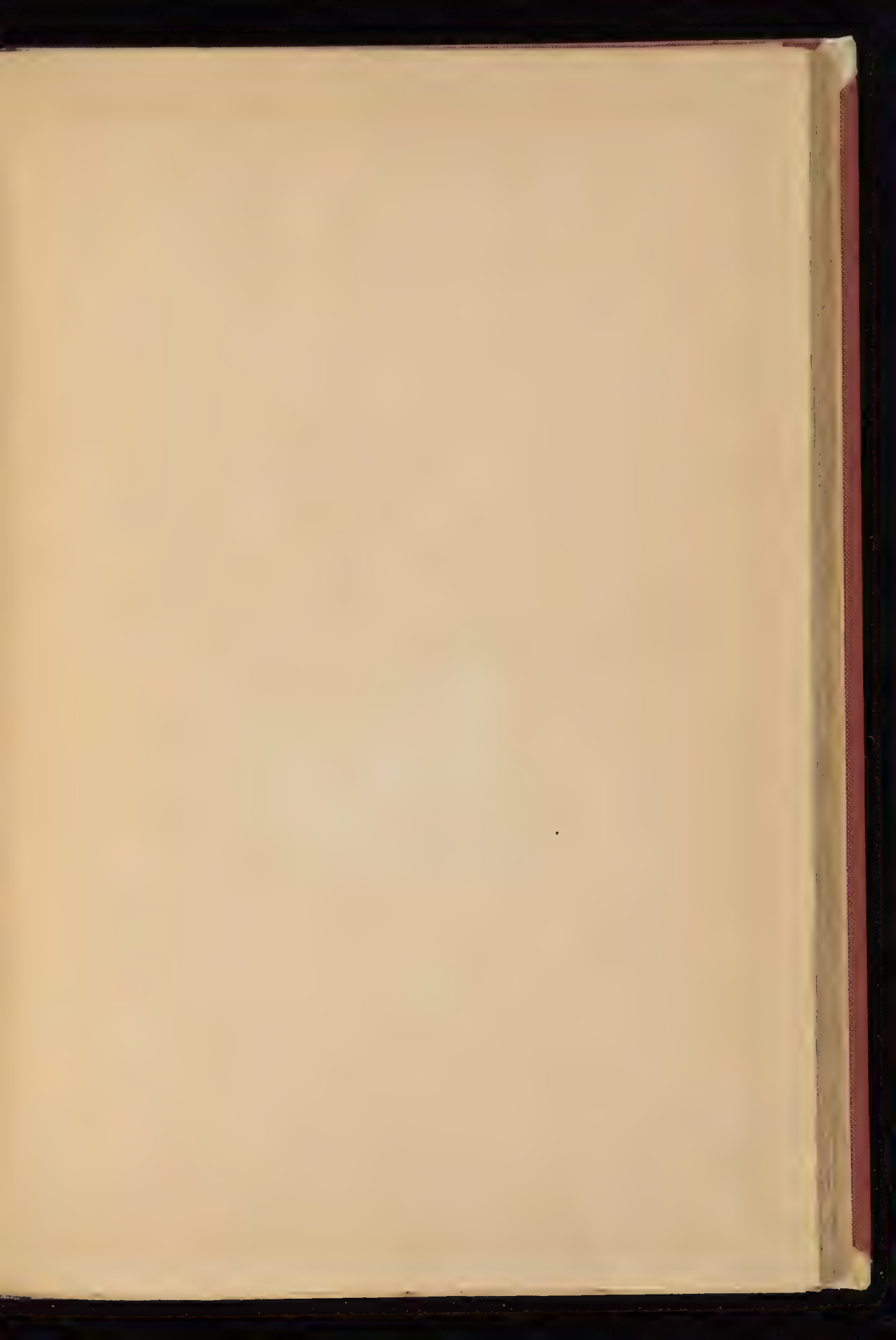
How many more themes there remains for me to speak of in his varied and much praised baggage. There is the "Bal des Tuileries", la "Course à

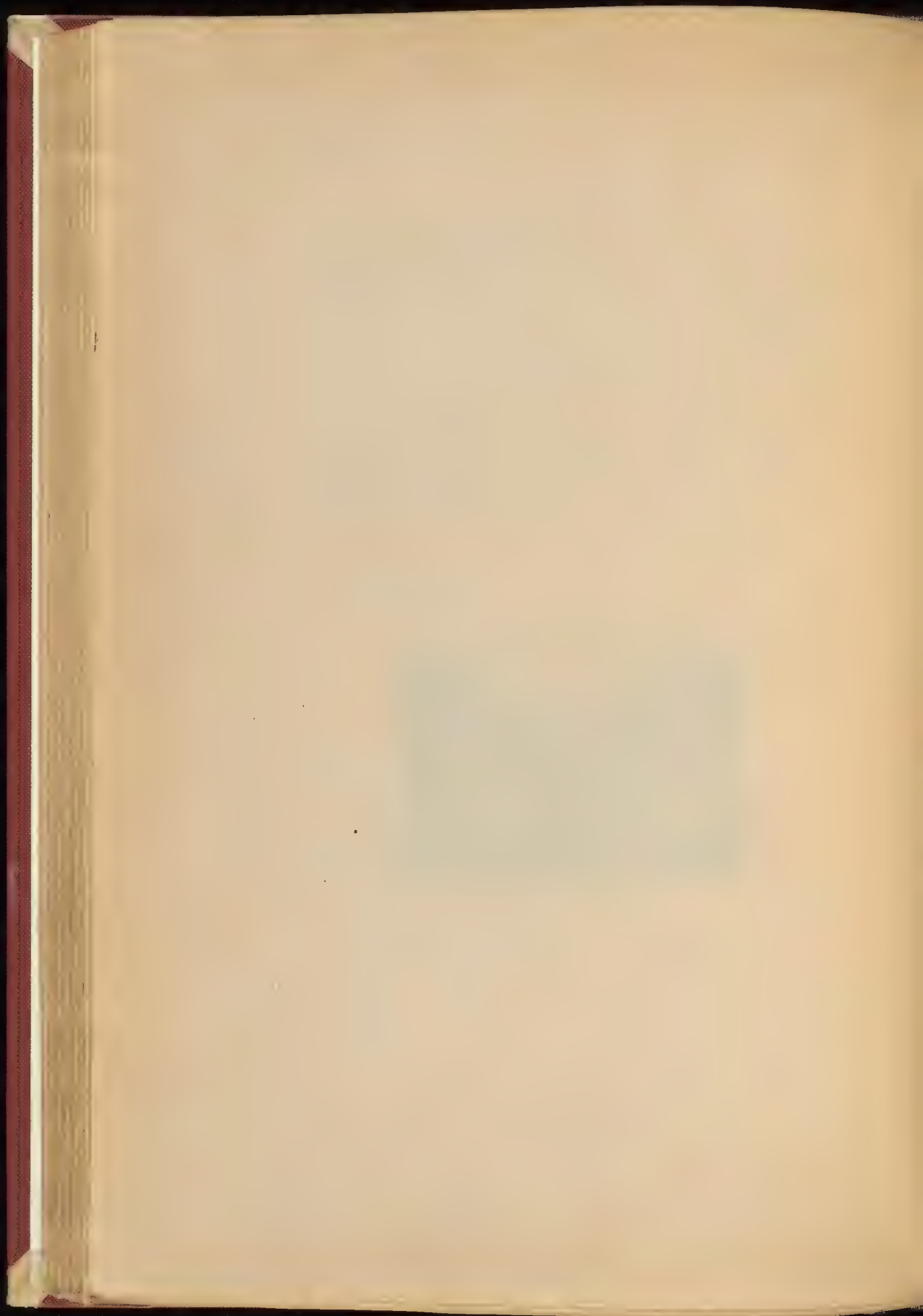
Chantilly", la "Revue des chasseurs", "Un bal de l'Opéra", le "Lever de la reine", l'"Orgie", l'"Escalier de marbre de Versailles", la "Flotie de Cherbourg", le "Baptême de Louis XIII", and "Gil Blas" illustrated, the twelve water-colors for the "Huguenots", and the twelve water-colors for the "Chroniques de Charles IX", and all de Musset, and then a prodigious labor; the "Faust" of Gounod a symphony in color of passionate admiration of the musical phrases that the master has written touching each episode.

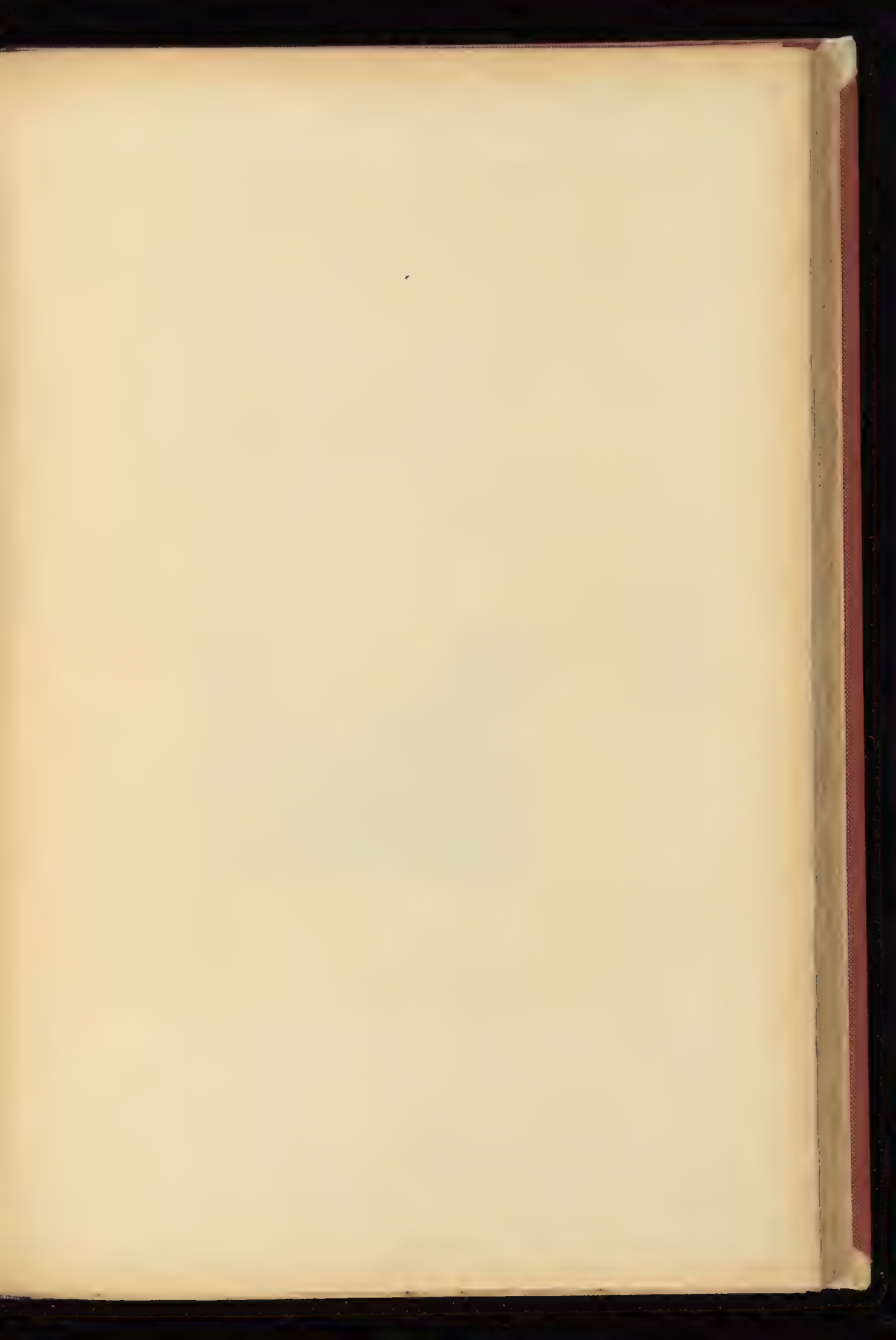
Have I said all? Not by any means. There remains many pages to be written if I would show the intimate and affectionate side of this painter. I could show what a real artist is and the difference between him and others that form the crowd of notorieties. I prefer to limit my study, to leave vague that which might excite public malignity and thus prove that as M. Eugène Lami does not desire to have the threshold of his private life crossed, my respect equals his modesty.

EUGÈNE MONTROSIER

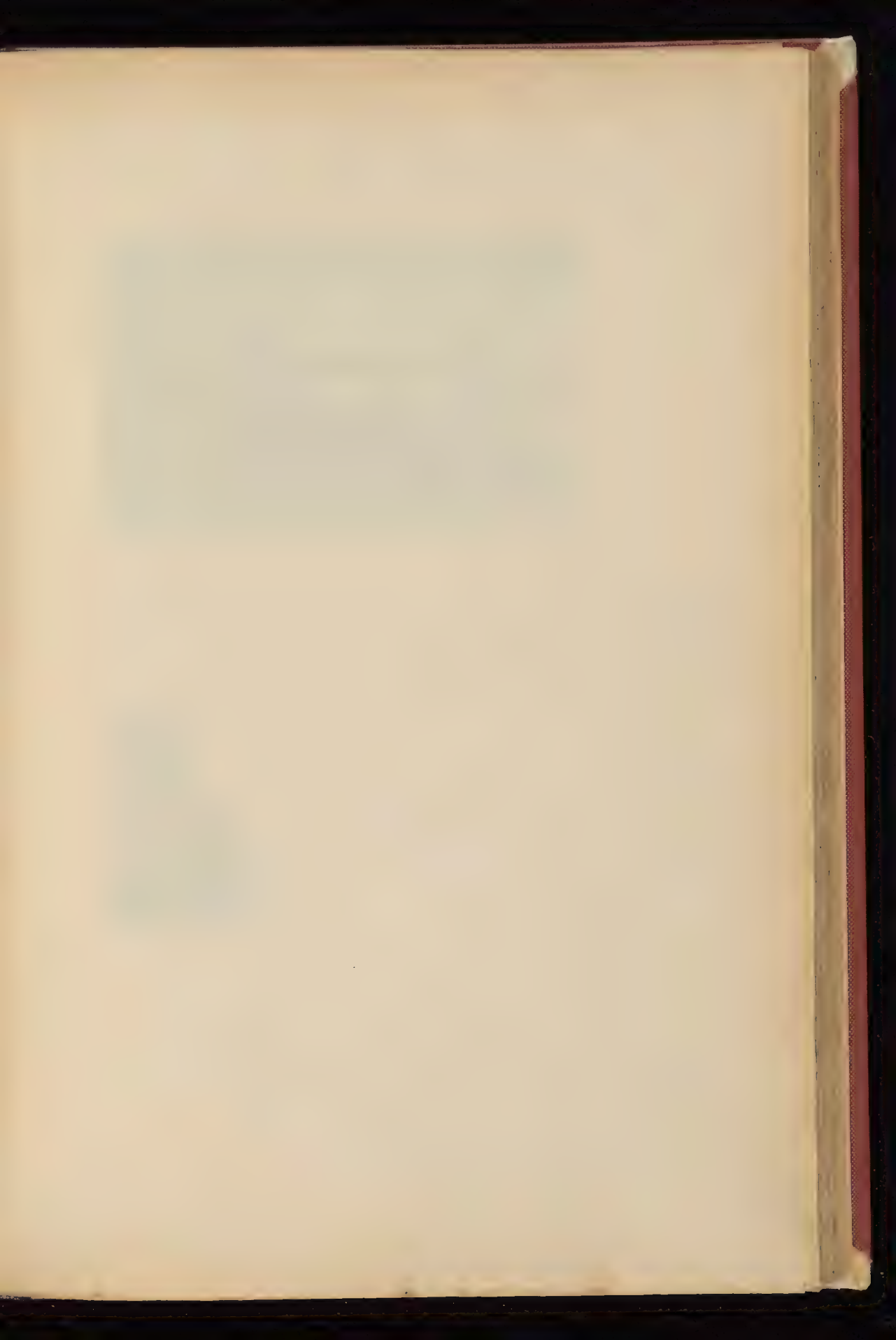






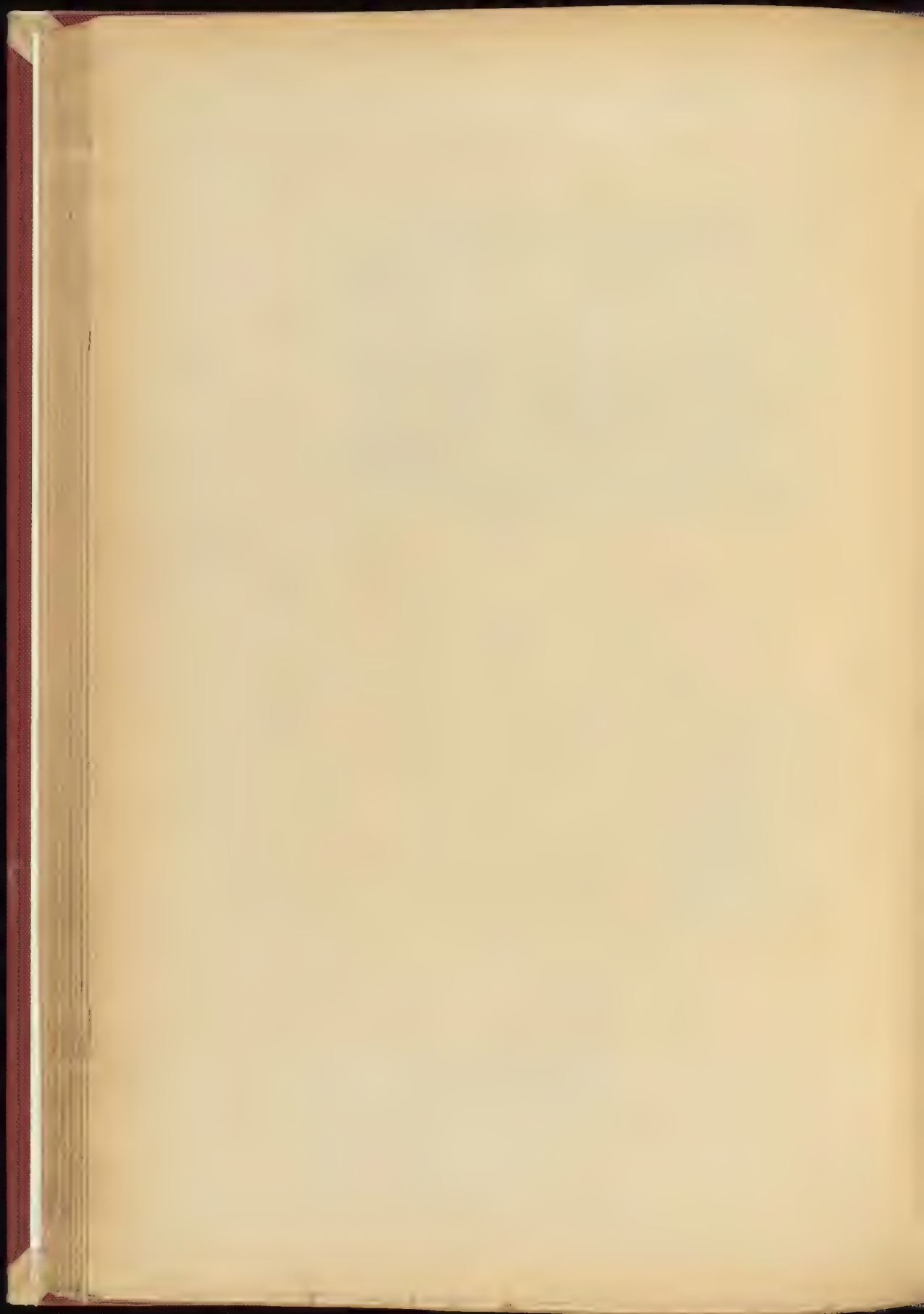


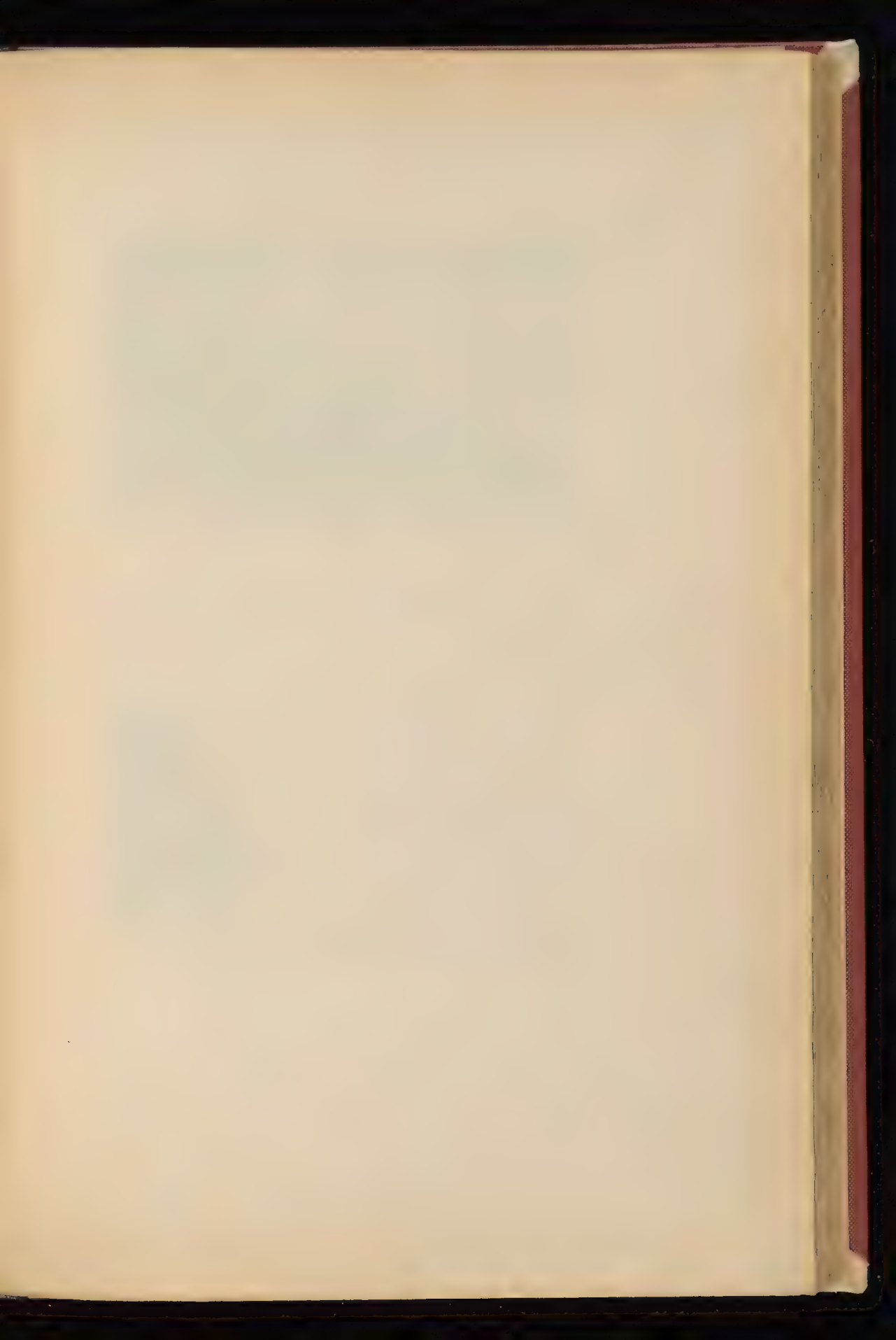


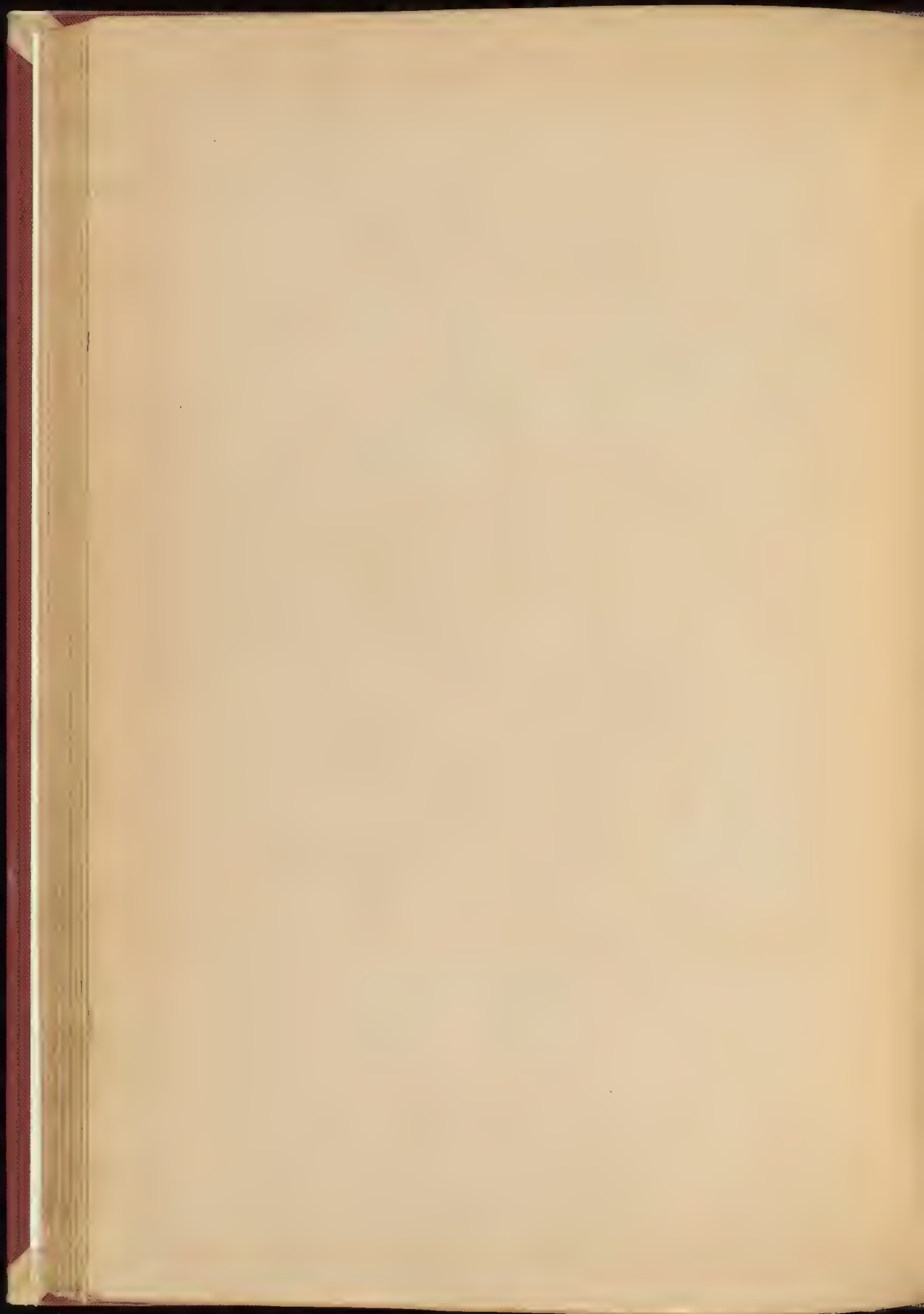














ROGER JOURDAIN



This artist belongs to the younger school, the school whose countersign may be quoted as " Culture with Simplicity ". This school freely proclaims its sympathy with modern art, while carefully avoiding the crude work of the naturalistic painters, yet going beyond the impressionists in their summary style of handling. In this new manner, where the impression and the expression are conveyed together, Roger Jourdain has arrived at a rank beside M. Duez, who is of the same age, nearly, with himself. As a vehicle, for carrying out their programme, water-color must be very attractive to both of them. Each, in fact, has brilliantly succeeded in it. The freshness of the tints in aquarelle, the closeness with which it can copy this climate's changeable and confused

skies, the directness with which it leaps to its effects, the brightly distinct impression it makes, must have been so many seductions for our experts in this method of working. They have adopted its laws, accordingly, in all their simplicity and in all their strictness, as if they were the inheritors of Jacquemart, the master water-color painter of our time.



Roger Jourdain confesses laughingly that he never had the persecuted childhood and youth which forms the pride of so many artists. He never was that little shepherd whom the strolling patron admires as he draws figures on the rock with a bit of charcoal. He never was the young law-clerk whom

his master punishes when he catches him profaning the majesty of stamped-paper with his unseasonable sketches. We look in vain at his beginnings for signs of those desperate struggles with stupid parents and hard times which, it seems, have the peculiarity of creating genius where none exists, of tempering the metal of certain hearts, and of introducing non-existent vigor. For my own part, I believe that these things have killed more young painters than they have produced great ones. Only see the tavern-haunters without a profession, and the low life of the artisan shops — a world of men degraded by the humiliations of an existence bereft of original resources. For those natures which deserve our interest, fortune is an instrument of action and a lever of dignity.



Roger Jourdain, then, has had the misfortune to be born, not on the steps of a throne, which is no longer an enviable lot, but in an opulent middle-class draper's house at Louviers. To say that it was his parent's dream to make him straightway an artist would be to exaggerate matters obviously. There is a mean between these seldom-found extravagances and a vulgar persecution. The young man had an uncle who had pursued the mixed career of an eminent lawyer and a meritorious architect. It was proposed that he should follow this excellent

example, certainly an alluring one, for it offered both the honorable rewards of a very noble art, and the intellectual interest of judicial science. We can easily figure the pretty little student career arranged by paternal solicitude. The architectural class of the Fine-Arts school for the mornings; the class of the Faculty for the afternoons. No room in it for the dissipation of those taverns and smoking-rooms where the Pandects often lead their votaries with a grand clatter of brandy-glasses. It was sagely planned, we must allow. The misfortune, or I would rather say the luck, of the thing was, that art takes complete despotic possession of its pupil, and does not allow their wits to stick to anything else, even if this other thing be the Institutes of Justinian or the Code Napoleon itself. Is it a wicked propensity of mine? but I always feel a secret delight when I hear people whom I think intelligent confess their horror for law-study, at least as it is taught in colleges. I fancy I see a proof of the honesty of their consciences and the rightness of their judgment; for I remember my own rebellions against the principles which used to be dinned in my ears. I am ready, besides, to offer the complete collection of my works in the richest binding, to any one who will tell me why, since we enjoy a permanent legislative machine, we do not make these doctors re-edit the contradictory articles of the code, rather than pay professors to find out all their possible senses. For after all, though we can do no better than turn over to the commentators a verse of the Bible, because it is written and cannot be re-written, this is no reason for giving a sacred character to a human and almost contemporary work. It was when this point struck me that I stopped short in my own legal studies.

But how far I have strayed from my subject! I have described the business-like life in which Roger Jourdain was brought up; but I have neglected to add that this life included an artistic element which was to



obtain the control, as the result proved. This thread of art was represented at first by the friendly relations of the head of the house with Jadin, the able painter of dogs, the father of Emmanuel Jadin, who keeps up with the son the traditional friendship. It is not hard to guess that Jadin encouraged the first essays of the young law-student, and gave him at the start his ambition to become a painter. The Homer of the Litter, himself rich, represented the dignity of art with a crusty authority which made it absolutely attractive. Besides, all the arts have this in common with poetry. The man we find drawing has been drawing always, and the



man who now writes verses has always been a writer. It was on the advice of his first director that Roger Jourdain entered the studio of Cabanel. A remark on this head. A great many of the young painters of the day who are making their mark have come out of this studio, and it is rare that artists recalling the fact do not find some disobliging speech to make about their professor. But it would be the right moment then to acknowledge, whatever may be the opinion in regard to Cabanel's own painting, that he is a master who turns out good pupils. The subject of our notice passed the regulation space of three years under the direction of this professor, in company with his old college comrade Philippoteaux.

Later, it was with him he made his first voyage in Brittany, Regnault also was of the expedition with Clairin and Butin, all had already acquired some personality, and a certain audacity. Before their superior experience and originality a real despair took possession of our hero; he was near to breaking his brushes and throwing the pieces into the sea, behold the im-

mense indifference of the Océan, it would have swallowed them, without the least remorse, and we should have been minus a powerful artist. Happily matters did not go so far. Before the fine works of others no small jealousies took possession of him. It is sufficient to look M. Roger Jourdain in the face to be convinced that he was profoundly incapable of feeling this sort of moral villany. This is an occasion to present a rapid portrait of him :

Large, well-built, tall and elegant, the nose rather strong, bearing himself well, teasing light-blue eyes darting intelligence and loyalty, a slightly curling moustache and pointed beard of chesnut frames an amiable and pleasant mouth, a kind but energetic physiognomy, truly manly. I will be entirely frank : although young in looks and in reality M. Roger Jourdain's hair does not expose him to the same dangers as Absalon, neither to the same accident as Samson, and I will add there would be little use for the scissors of a modern Dalilas.

Here occurs a second voyage more important than the first. It was made in company with Clairin and Henri Regnault. Their intention was to travel over Spain in all its length and breadth. But Madrid held them. Madrid where Regnault executed that fine copy

of " Lanas ", which was one of his finest envoies, having obtained permission for this purpose, to absent himself from the Villa Medicis, and here achieve his roman studies. Jourdain like his illustrious companion copied the master Velasquez, who held for him irresistible attractions; courage returned, he tasted the noble enjoyment of feeling that he was making progress. Thus his first exhibition in 1869 was a spanish picture. For from the commencement what was under his eyes appealed more



strongly to him than academic subjects. Thus his talent strengthened with singular sincerity and early freed itself from school traditions. He was at once himself. Art being after all but nature seen through a human brain.

The next summer our artist visited Russia. Experience here taught him that each country should be seen in the season which best develops the originality of its aspects. Russia without doubt would have greatly interested him had she appeared to him under her glittering snowy mantle, in her hoar-frost ornaments and diamond-sparkling icicles, and had he rushed through in the fascinating and seductive sledges drawn by black horses. But he was not inspired with the bright blue sky and sun-burnt vegetation.

Art is often influenced by the chances of life. It happened that I saw Holland during the terrible winter of 1880, with its shining and solid canals, its large, low roofs covered with snow, bordered only by a small edge of red bricks. It was beautiful, so beautiful that entirely absorbed by the landscape I forgot to visit the museums. I saw it later in milder weather and the powerful charm had disappeared leaving only a pleasant but not a grand nature. The Russian voyage was no more profitable to Roger Jourdain than to M. Lafitte, who had scarcely arrived at Saint-Petersbourg than he was confined to his bed by an accident, as soon as he was able to be removed he returned to France, he was wont to say naively that he had never found a country of so little interest.

War was declared, that fatal war where so many hopes were engulfed,



where Henri Regnault found a soldier's heroic death. In the last exhibition given under the imperial regime, that of 1870, Roger Jourdain sent two new studies a gladiator and a child which were noticed for the cleverness of their execution. Soon after he donned the artillery uniform and took his places with the batteries defending the Point-du-Jour.

All Paris was then under arms. Théophile Gautier had returned and here contracted the illness that ended his life two years later, and here wrote his admirable "Tableaux du siège", one of his best books where we find traced the patriotic efforts of our painters and sculptors amidst falling shells in the snow and cold, for the glory of the "Patrie".



At last the cannons were silent, it was a solemn epoch and the debut of nobles efforts. Each one felt that they must seek, outside the career of arms, the glory of France.

A very appreciable movement soon made itself felt, a movement of renovation by a direct and immediate study of nature.

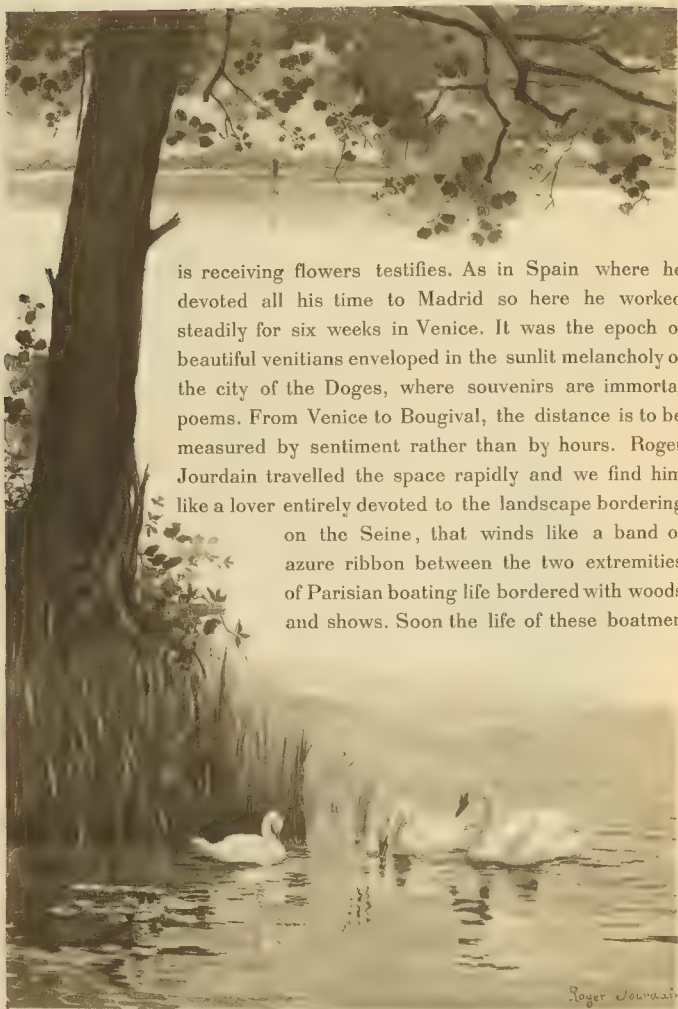
The coast of Britany and Normandy attracted the landscape painters. Roger Jourdain felt like all the rest this impulsion, and it was Villerville that inspired several canvases and a picture exhibited at the following Salon, in company with a spanish souvenir.

The desire to rove had not abandoned him.

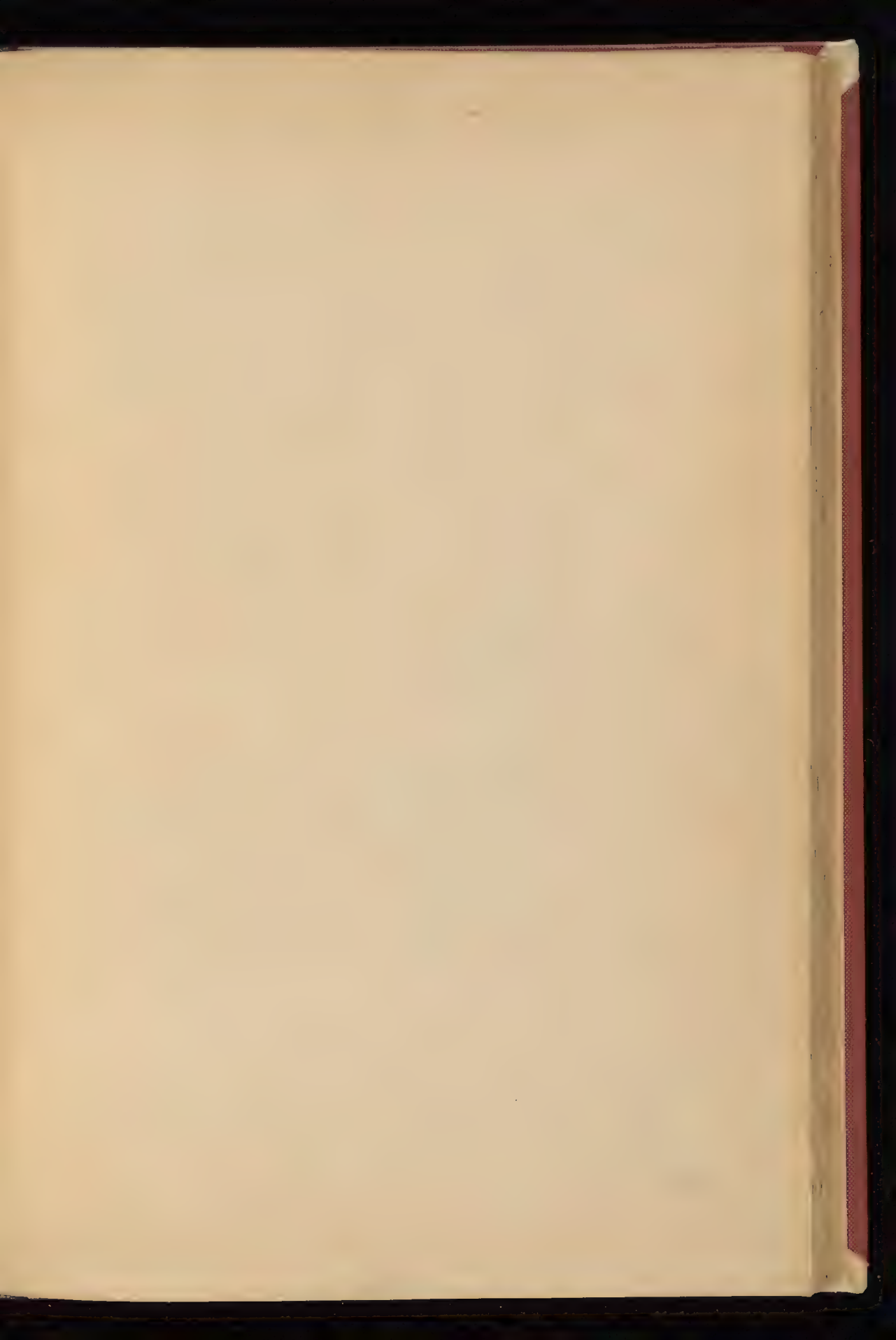
On the same floor with his, was the studio of Théodore Frère who talked to Jourdain of the Orient with so communicative an enthusiasm that he was soon en route. It is to this voyage we owe among others the "Scheik disant la bonne aventure".

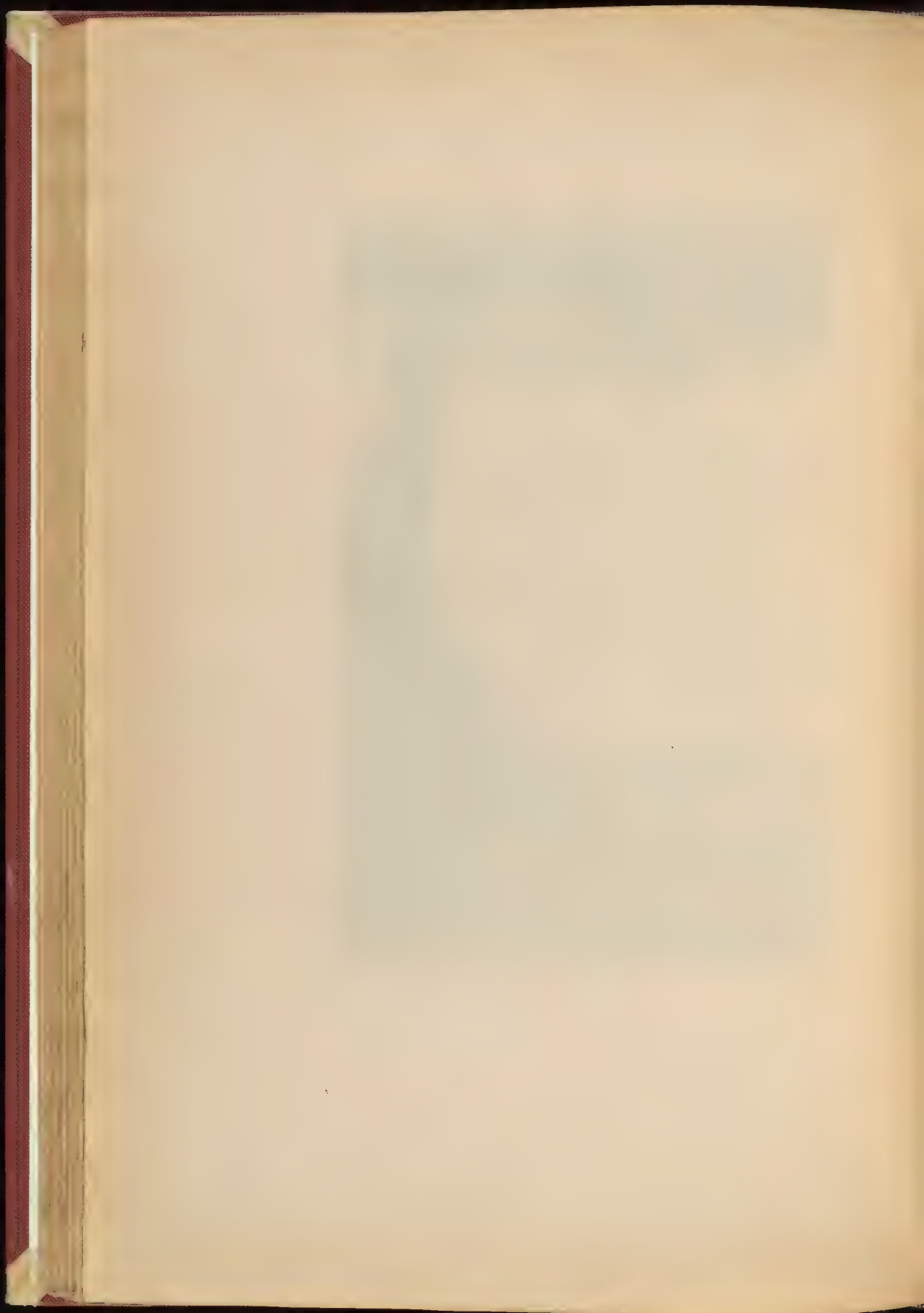
However the parisian modern movement had a disciple in Roger Jourdain as his "Jour de fête", where a woman in white morning dress

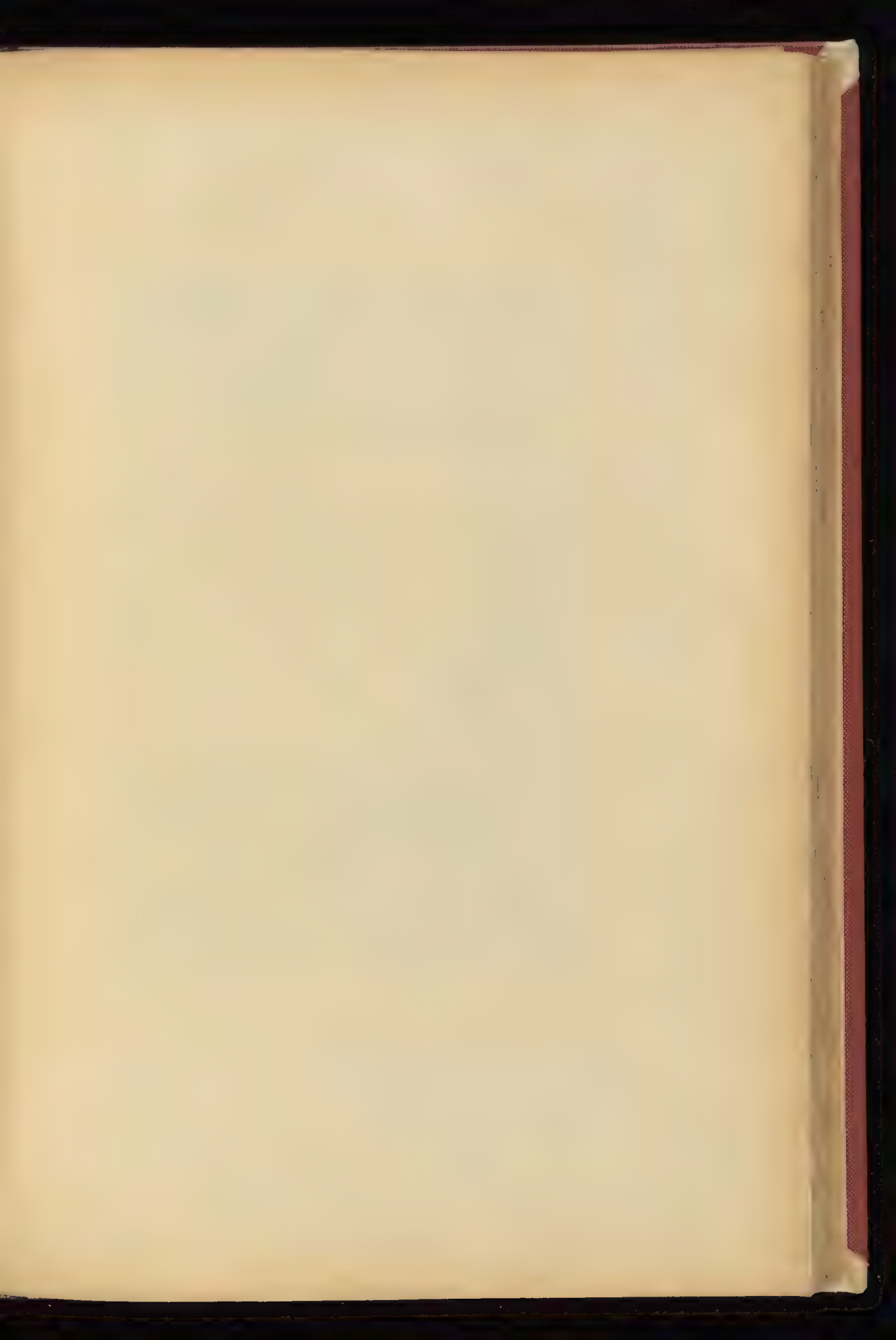




is receiving flowers testifies. As in Spain where he devoted all his time to Madrid so here he worked steadily for six weeks in Venice. It was the epoch of beautiful venitians enveloped in the sunlit melancholy of the city of the Doges, where souvenirs are immortal poems. From Venice to Bougival, the distance is to be measured by sentiment rather than by hours. Roger Jourdain travelled the space rapidly and we find him like a lover entirely devoted to the landscape bordering on the Seine, that winds like a band of azure ribbon between the two extremities of Parisian boating life bordered with woods and shows. Soon the life of these boatmen

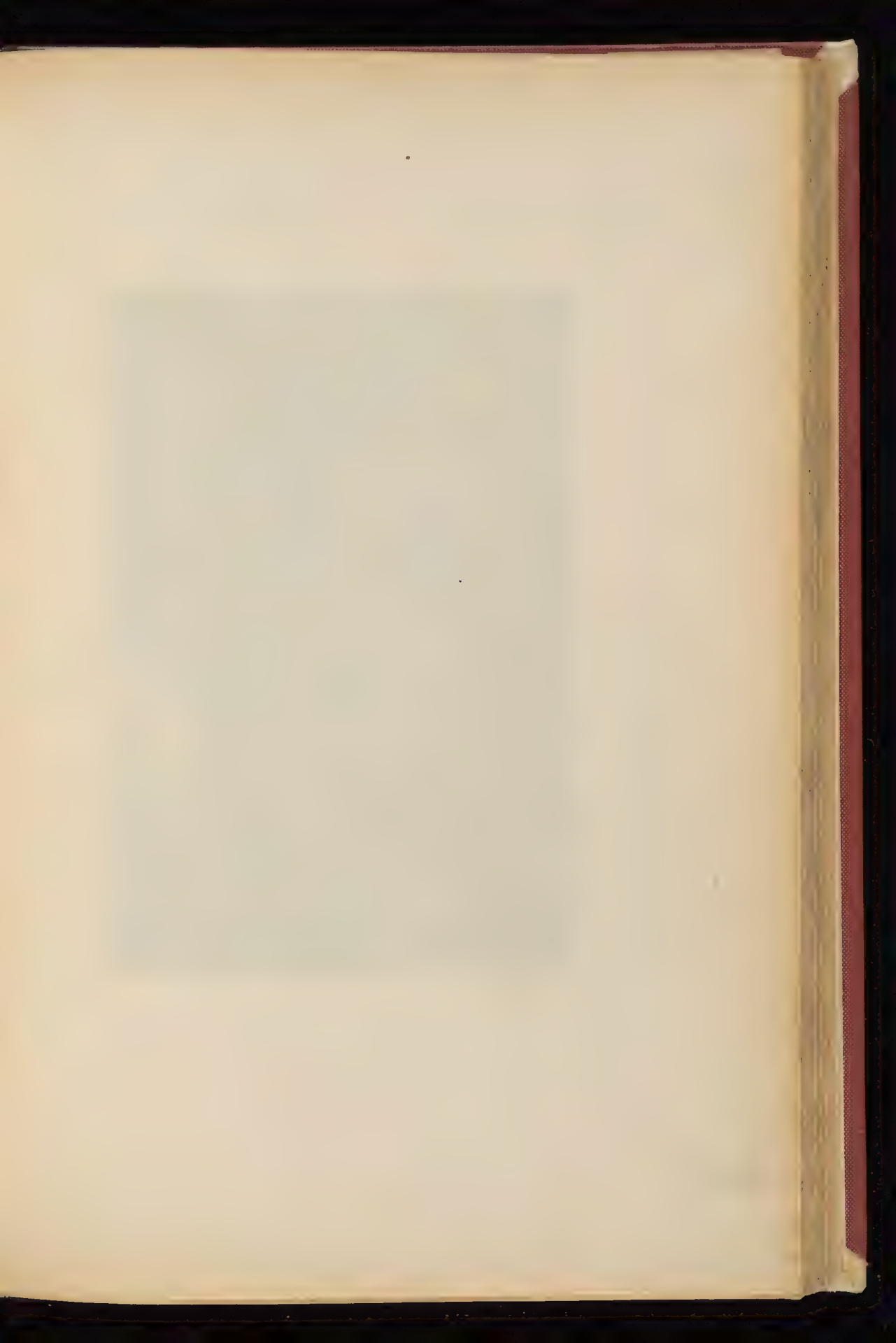






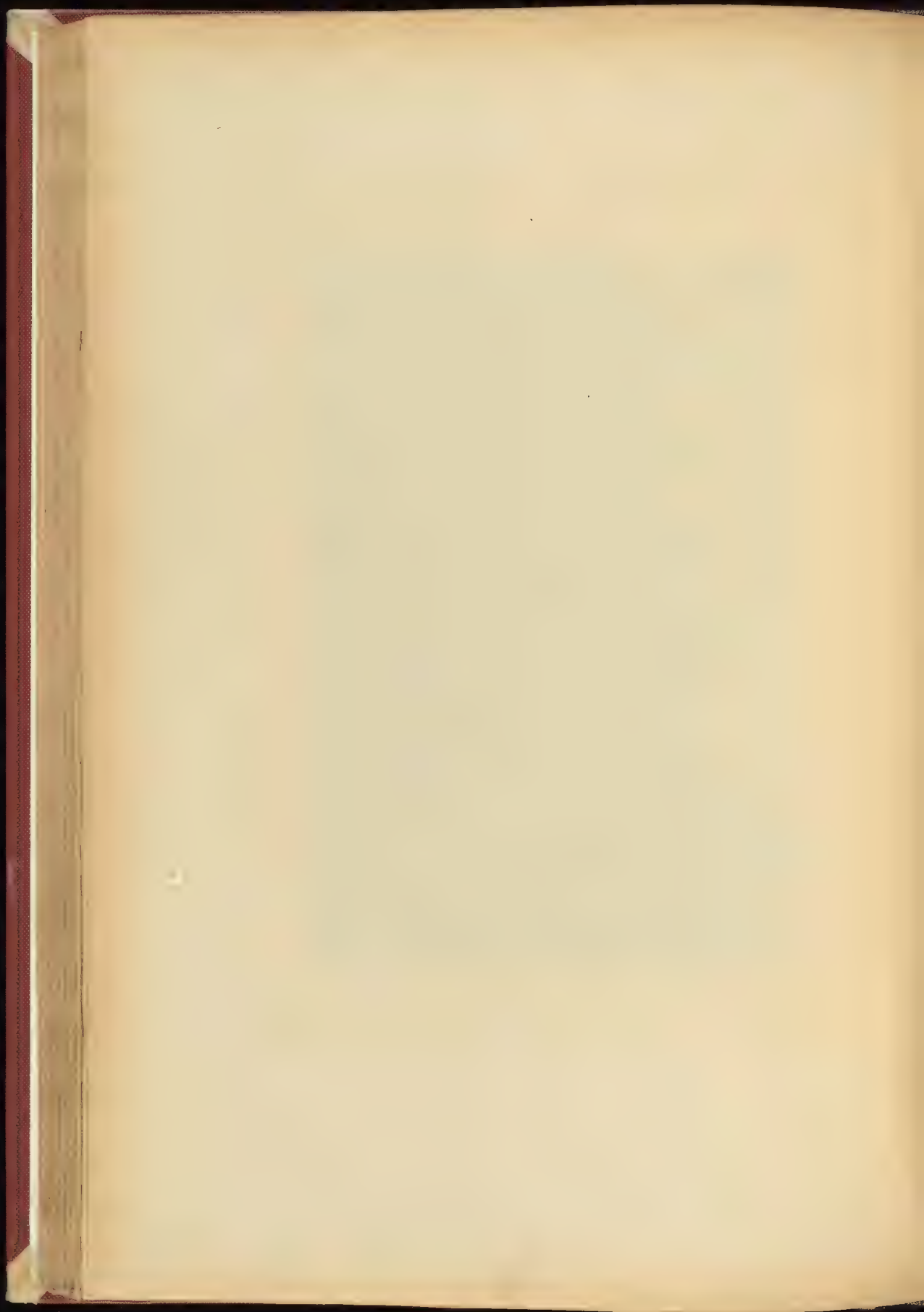


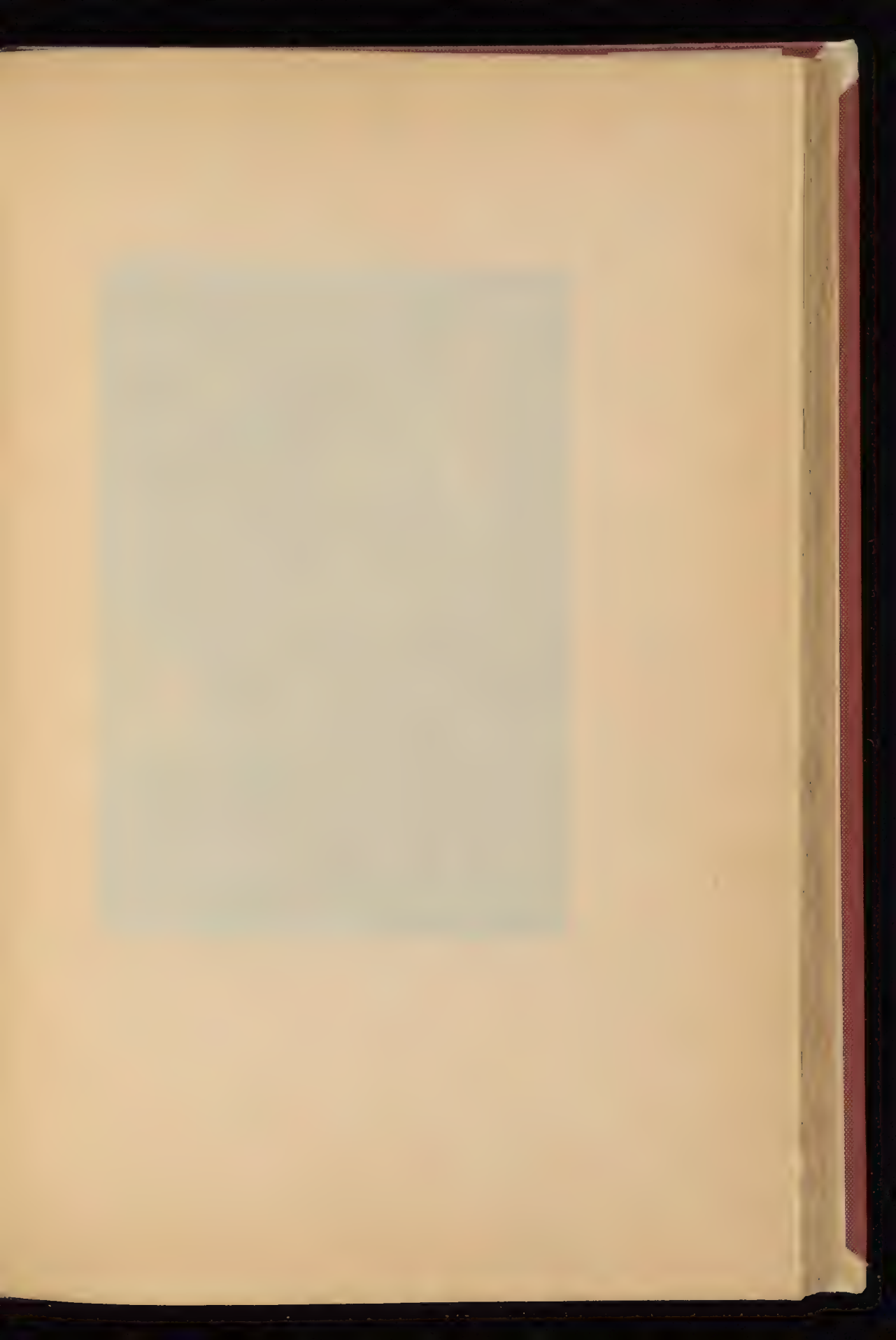
Roger Courant

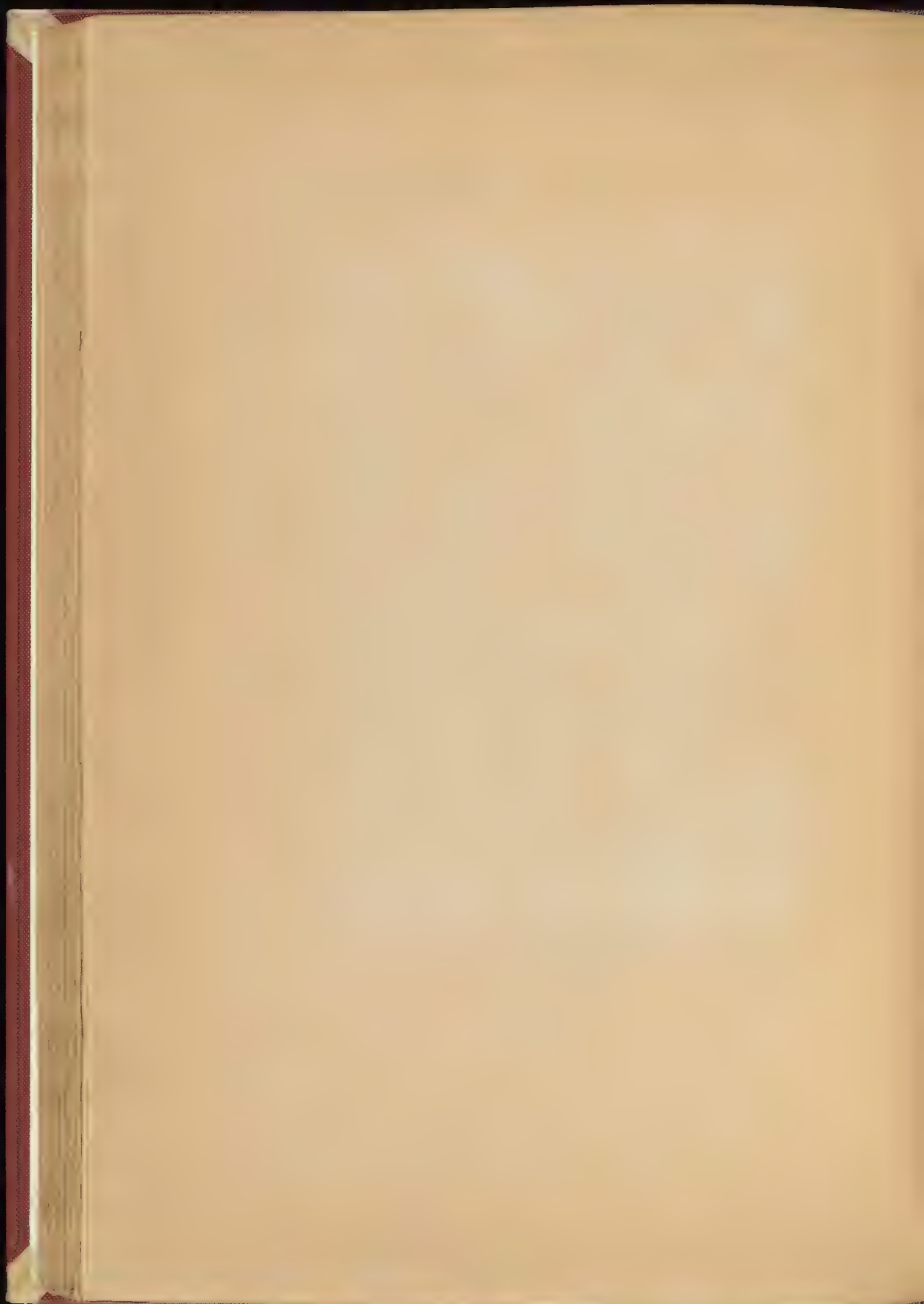




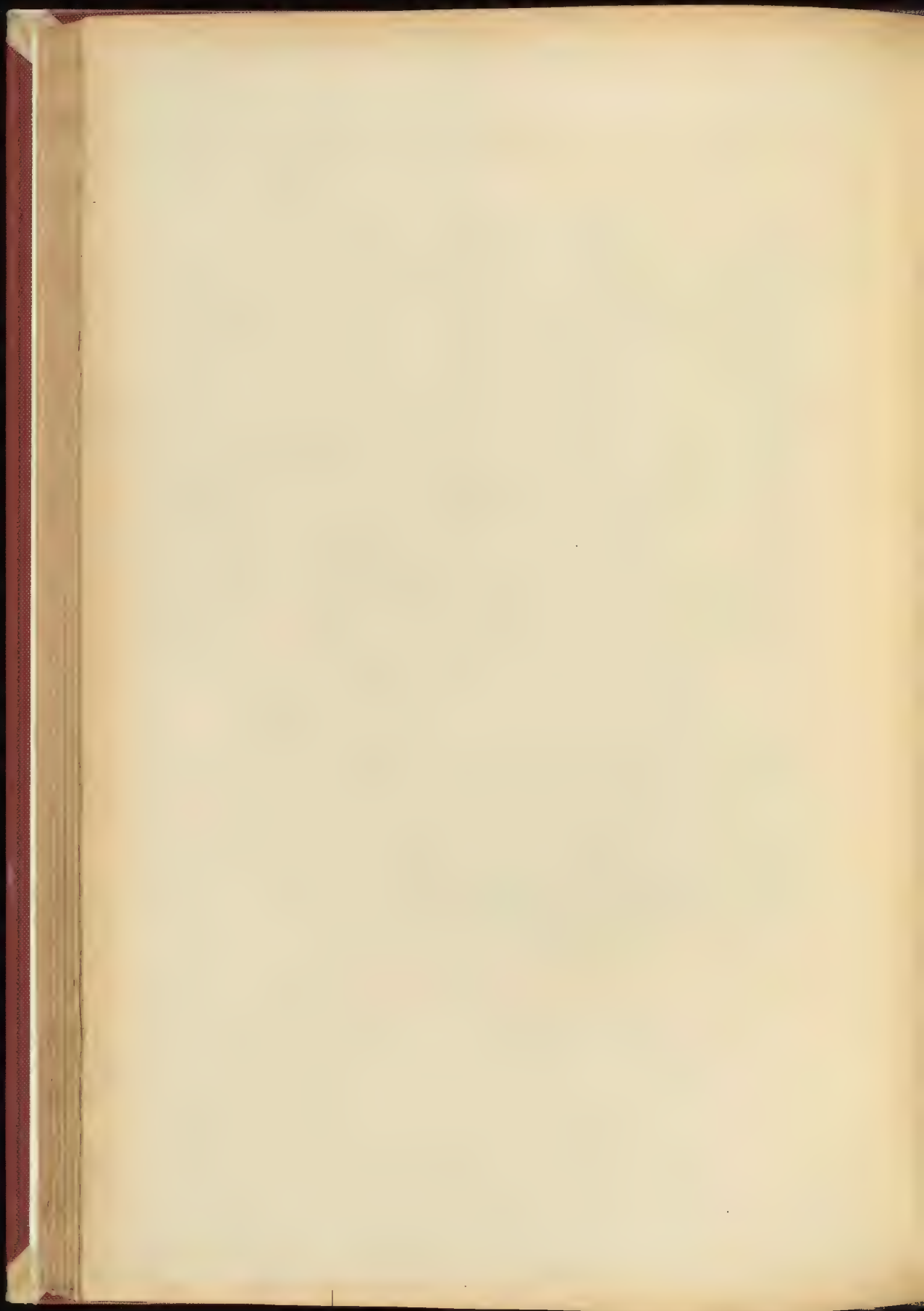












had no secrets for him. Who does not remember when interest, in boating life commenced to be shown in France, when Alphonse Karr, Léon Gatayes and Louis Gudin were its first representatives, and when Théophile Gautier excused himself from making one of them in a sonnet, little known and which will be read with curiosity :

Partez, chers compagnons, la brise ride l'onde,
Un beau reflet ambré dore le front du Jour;
Comme un sein virginal sous un baiser d'amour,
La voile sous le vent palpète et se fait ronde.

Une écume d'argent brode la vague blonde;
Le bord fuit; c'est d'abord Mante et sa double tour,
Puis cent autres clochers qui filent tour à tour,
Puis Rouen la gothique et l'Océan qui gronde.

Au dos du vieux lion, terreur des matelots,
Vous allez confier votre barque fragile
Et flatter de la main sa crinière de flots.

Horace fit une ode au vaisseau de Virgile,
Moi j'implore pour vous, dans ces quatorze vers,
Les faveurs de Thétis, la déesse aux yeux verts.

In a boating manuel of this time, I find this phrase in speaking of the cabin of a sail-boat : It should enable the captain to dispense with his speak-



ing-trumpet ,
sa hache d'abordage and contain all the objets he might need during his promenade. Poitiers possessed then an admiral

who yielded nothing to the admirals sutans de la comedied, dressed in a superb captain's uniform. The institution has to day entered a more practical form, one worthy to occupy the leisure of an intelligent man fond of nature.

This is the case of Roger Jourdain who made this his starting point for a serie of charming studies full of grace and truth. Listening, to the inviting

songs of carousers seated at tables by the riverside, to the calm and languishing music under the bridges or to the complaints of the birds that the breath of the wind brings intermittingly, all this mon-daine life that imparts the heart's poetry to our youth.

In 1878 two landscapes directly inspired by these suburbs had a lively success with the public: they were called "le Dimanche" and "le Lundi," and were rendered with truth as our readers will remember.

"Le Dimanche", a branch of the Seine seen from the banks lined with large trees. A group of friends on the grass, the boat moored to a tree-trunk in the high river grass, the water starred with nenuphars. Two young girls, one bareheaded the other wearing a graceful straw hat, are beating the measure with their forks to a merry song that a big fellow in a linen vest and bare arms holding a champagne bottle in either hand is singing.

It is, I think, by Fernand Desnoyers, and les Lionnet have made it popular.



C'est près du pont de Chatou
Que l'on voit sans peine
Couler ses jours jusqu'au bout
Au gré de la Seine.
Là, dans la fraîcheur du soir,
Sur la berge vient s'asseoir
Madame Fontaine,
O gué!
Madame Fontaine!

The two other companions of the ladies, in berets, with light-colored sacks coats are reclining near them. The empty lunch basket and the glasses have rolled near the boat, with hastily picked wild flowers, tumbled napkins and half filled plates. The river is illuminated in half its width by a brilliant reflection from the sky. It was gay, living and very sincere of a solid execution, in a word an excellent example of modernity.

"Le Lundi", another gaiety in a neighboring landscape, for we again approach a charming bank of the river under a curtain of shade trees. The gentle sex is banished from this love-feast. One man having for his guests,

four robust companions *en ballade* as they say in the refined language of the police courts; our surfeited friends are seated on benches around a table without a cloth, upon which the bottles stand in file like soldiers at roll call, the host drawn up to his full height, his cap pushed back rattles off a song for his comrades. What song?

Perhaps a fine refrain of Pierre Dupont, or rather a sentimental ditty in which a Crusader grieves sorely that he may not marry a jewess; more probably one of those showy absurdities with which the *cafés-concerts* have inundated the workshops, a *Je suis Popaul* of some sort. The tavern-



keeper who has so generously served his *château-litron* has come under the door way to listen; it is the least they can do to give a little concert for his benefit. A marauder that comes from the banks finishes the picture; a true impression of the aspirations of the poor-devils of today who one day in the week during the summer forget in some verdant corner their hard,

degrading life in the workshop. All workmen are not like these as has been shown by the poet Manuel, who has become janitor of a *mi-savants* society; but I find them infinitely true. These two episodes treated with pathos and good humor pleased infinitely the



spectators of the Salon; who are pleased with impressions full of real life for which they cannot be reproached.

It was not however until the following year at the Salon of 1879 that Roger Jourdain obtained his first recompense. For "*le Chaland*" which was a success both with the artists and the public. The composition of

this picture though much simpler, had an incontestable grandeur, we find there the image of that extreme monotony that is seen in all those heavy boats that slowly pass, to and fro, on the Seine with their freight of coals,



enlivened by the little box of flowers and bird-cage. Who has not been touched by the sight of these floating homes, and has not wished to live there a few days carried by the current down the river far from the importunate and monotonous, uproar of the streets.

With an horizon of poplars and willows cut out against the clear sky, and rocked by the rhythm of the water that is never absolutely silent I have felt the charm and for my part have made the wish a hundred times.

At the Salon of 1880 we do not find Roger Jourdain, but in 1881 he is again represented and there obtained a second medal with his "Le Halage", it was a well chosen subject for a picture, a canal boat being drawn by women; the boat is seen in the distance down the perspective of the winding canal, in the foreground the women harnessed to the long tow-line are exerting their strenght to propel the boat along. There are figures upon the boat seen



in the distance, most likely they are of the stronger sex, but here the women are laboring as beasts of burden gallantry being unheeded; perhaps the men on board have earlier in the day taken their turn at the "Halage" and will when their hour comes round again change places with the women-kind while they cook the dinner aboard for their lords and masters. And the artist has given a very touching impression of the scene, the toiling women, the

slow sluggish boat the tant tow-line gracefully curving through the picture, and the beautiful landscape in the still, soft atmosphere pervading all, a touching impression, well worthy of the recompense.



It is only since four years that water-colors has enlisted a new champion. Water-color painting which for a long time has held so small a place in french art and which the contemporaneous movement is trying to extend and naturalize. I have already stated what an irresistible attraction this medium has upon a painter with a passion for reality, and who is above all things sincere. It allows in fact the open air to attain a point never reached by oil painting and then how much nearer its effects, so limpid, simple and spontaneous, are to those of Nature. The finest Diaz has not the brilliant light of a Jacquemart.

During the past four years, M. Roger Jourdain has been represented at the water-color exhibition, whose cradle was Duran's studio and which this year was rue de Sèze, and where he has made for himself a position.

Refering only to the last exhibition certainly no one has forgotten "Les Nouvelles de l'absent" where that fine woman is looking, at the sea, from her open window; or that handsome couple of lovers to whom an old sailor is showing the wet traces of the last high tide. It is, at



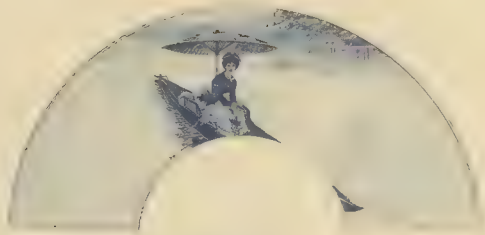
once, an exquisite and solid art. His works preserve the spontaneous and unstudied flavor of the process. M. Jourdain excels in painting the Parisiennes devoted to a bit of nature, on the grass; then with children

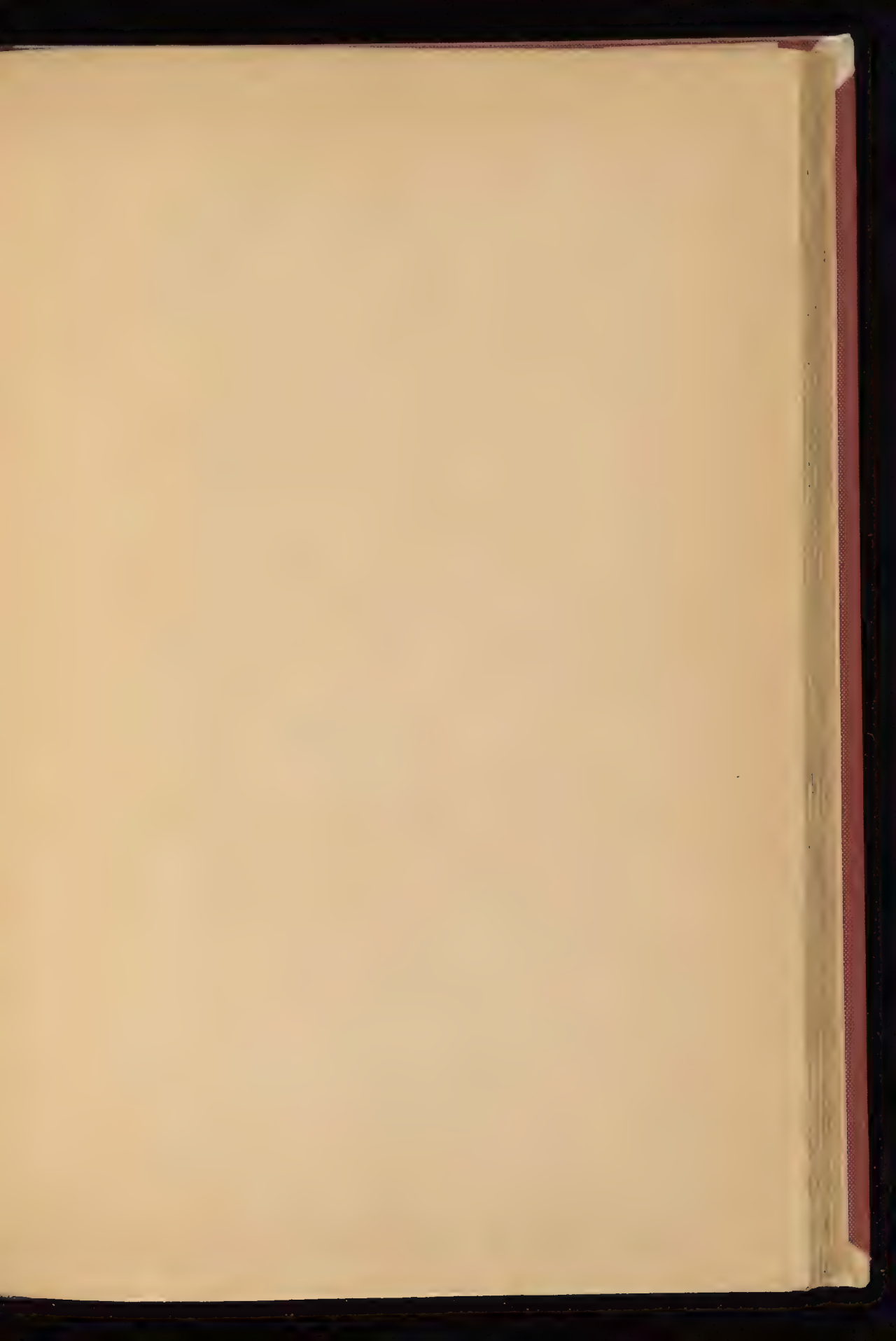
playing, or before the waves that have brought, and laid at their feet, their lost playthings.

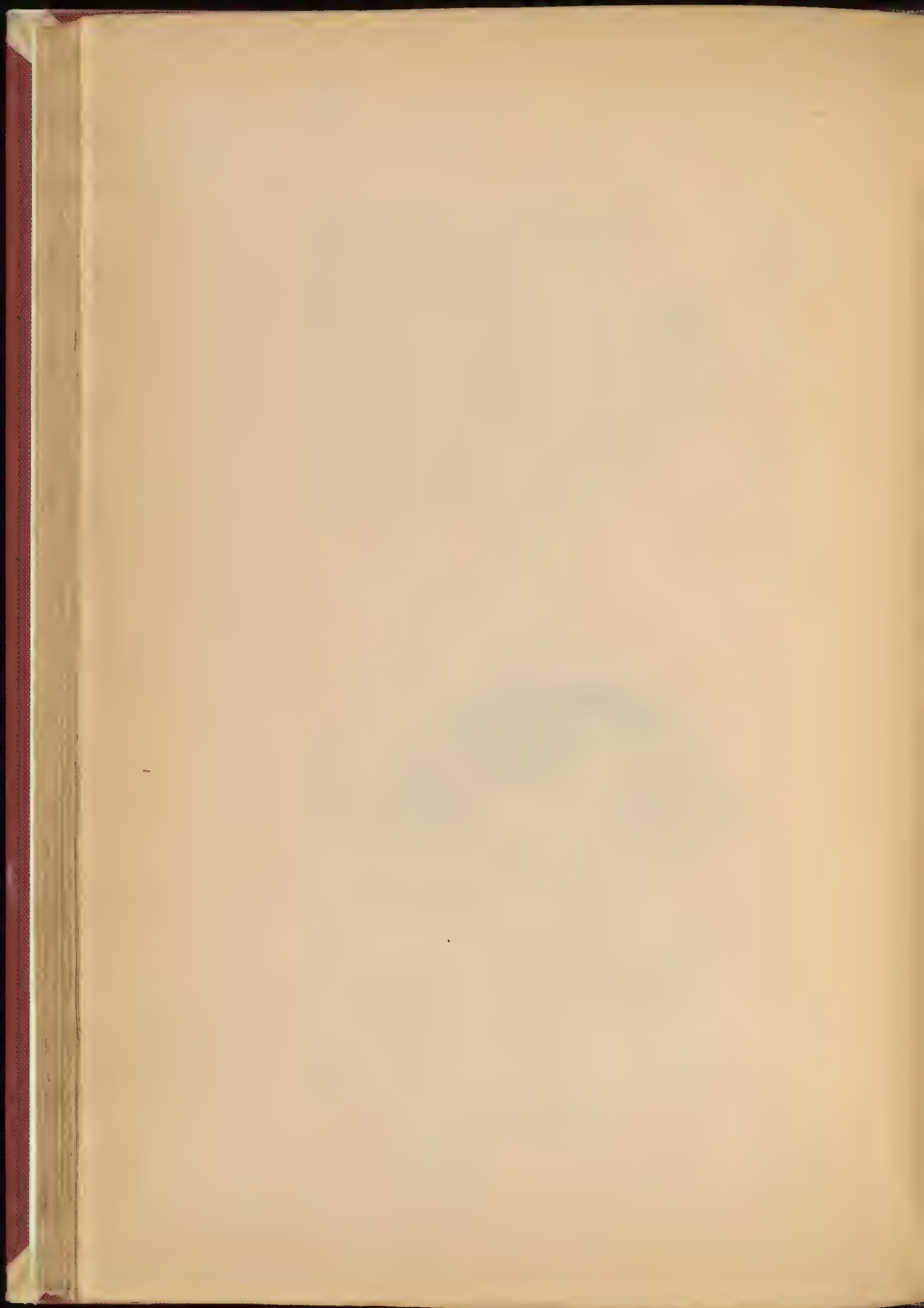
In this new departure of water-color painting the last word has not yet been said. Those bearing the names of Roger Jourdain and Duez work earnestly, not making use of the many legitimate artifices frequently employed. For if they succeed in the result, what difference is there as to the means they employ. Other less content to turn their difficulties by a deceptive method insist on boldly attacking them in front. These valiant ones of the first category have already been recompensed by the interest accorded to them and their works by the public.

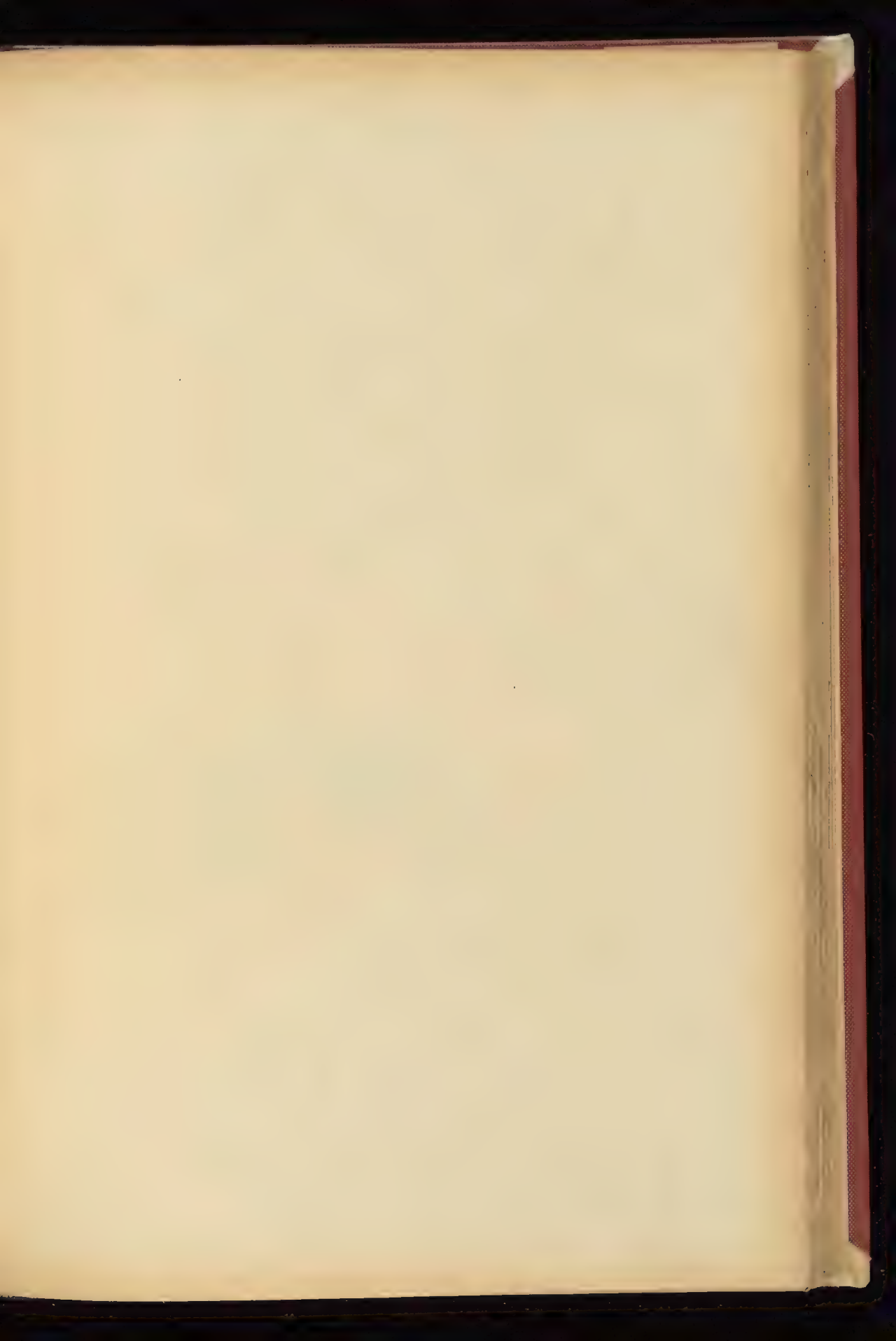
We have only to offer our best wishes and bid them *bon courage*, knowing their faith and passion. Their little phalanx is particularly sympathetic to us and in this distinguished body a prominent position is already held by Roger Jourdain.

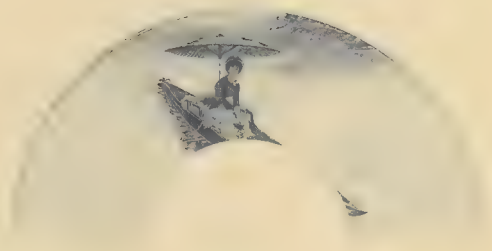
ARMAND SILVESTRE

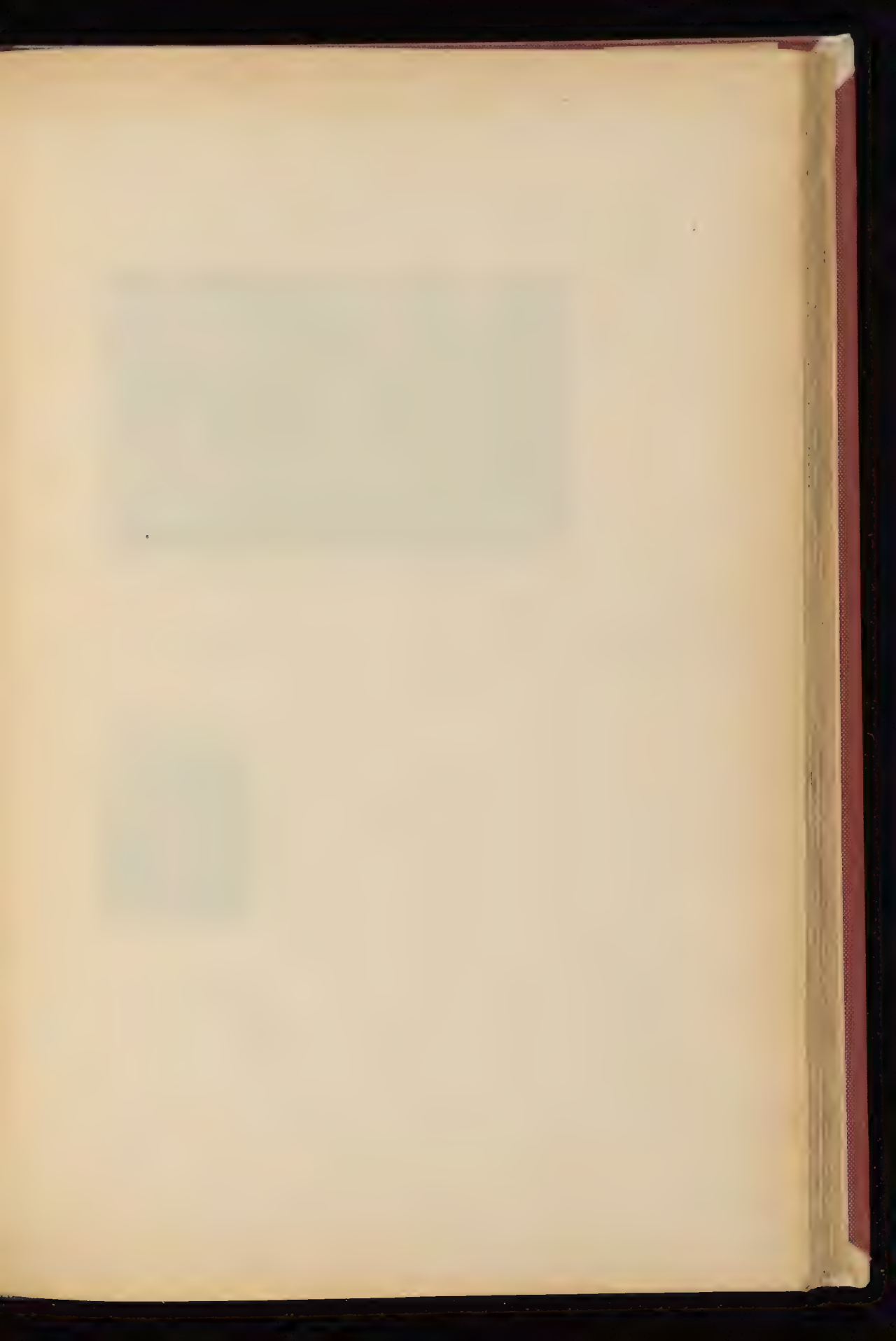


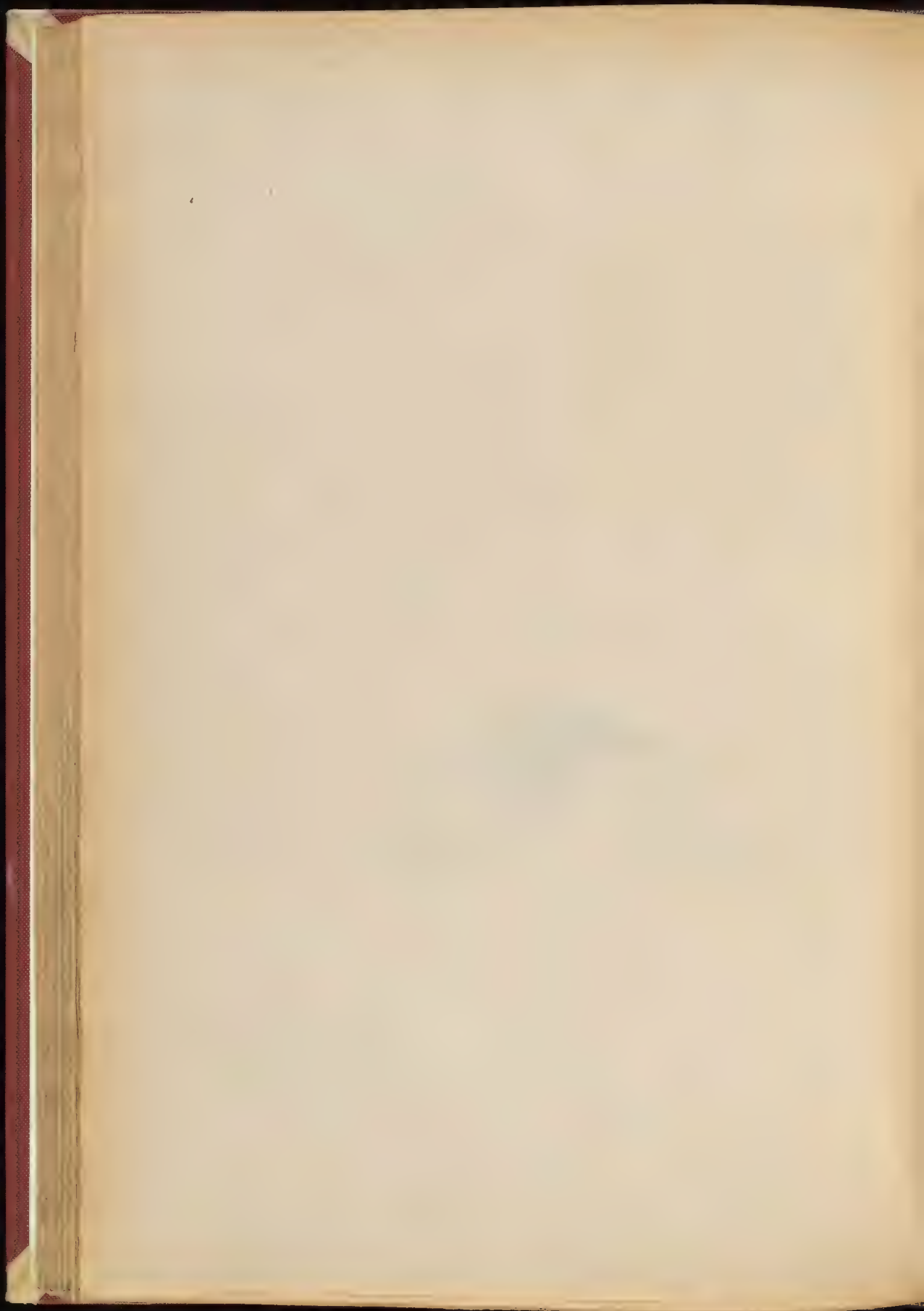




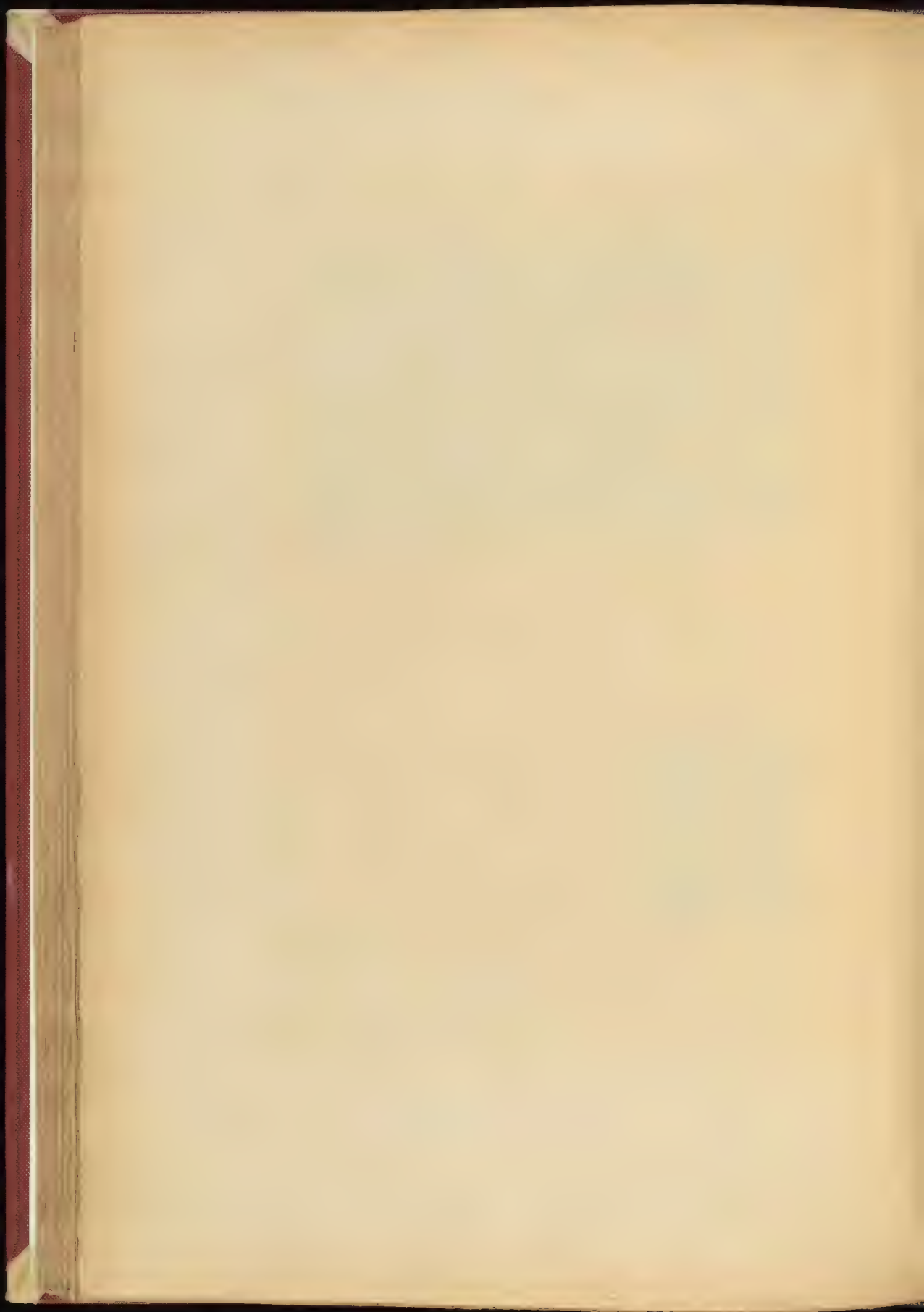


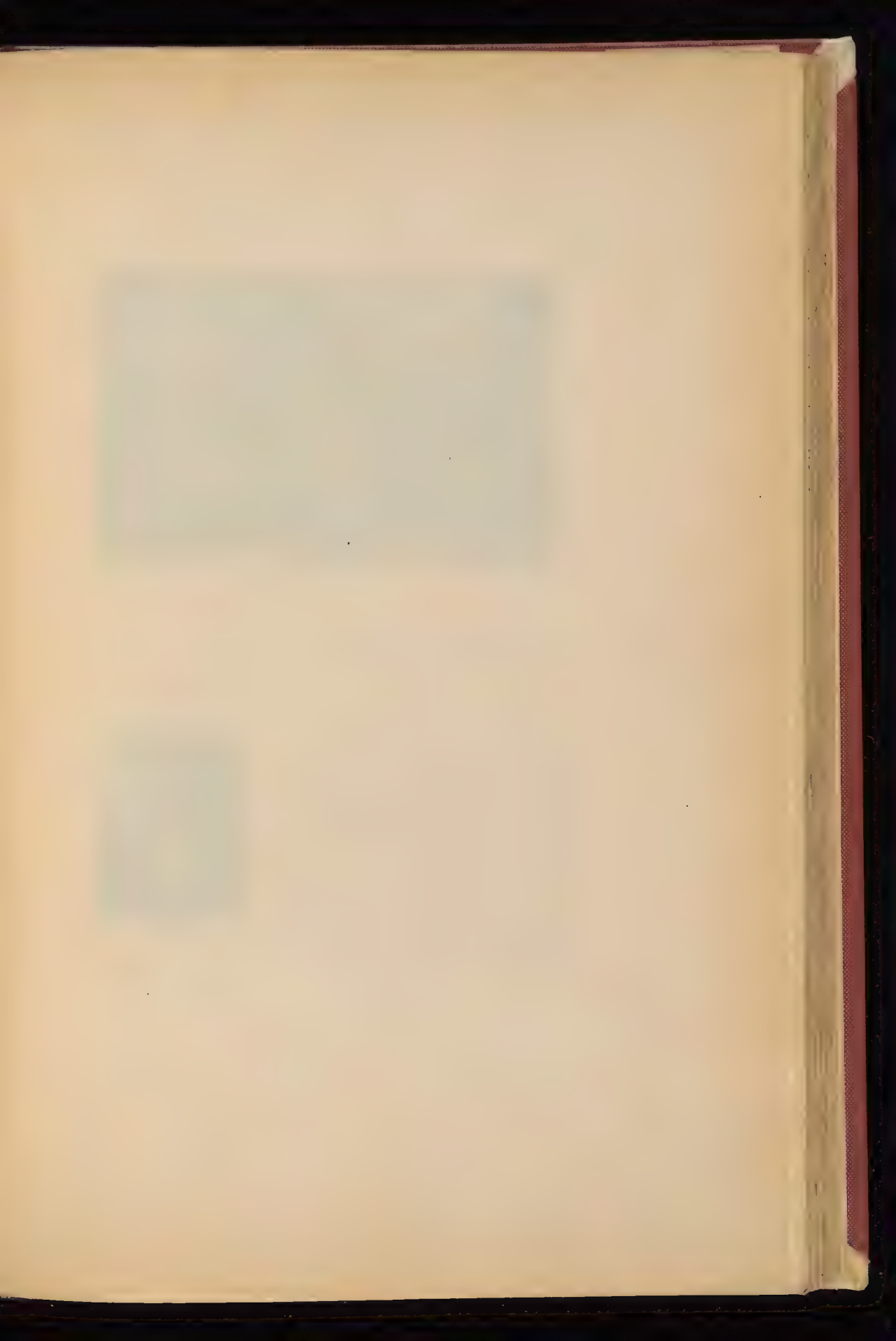


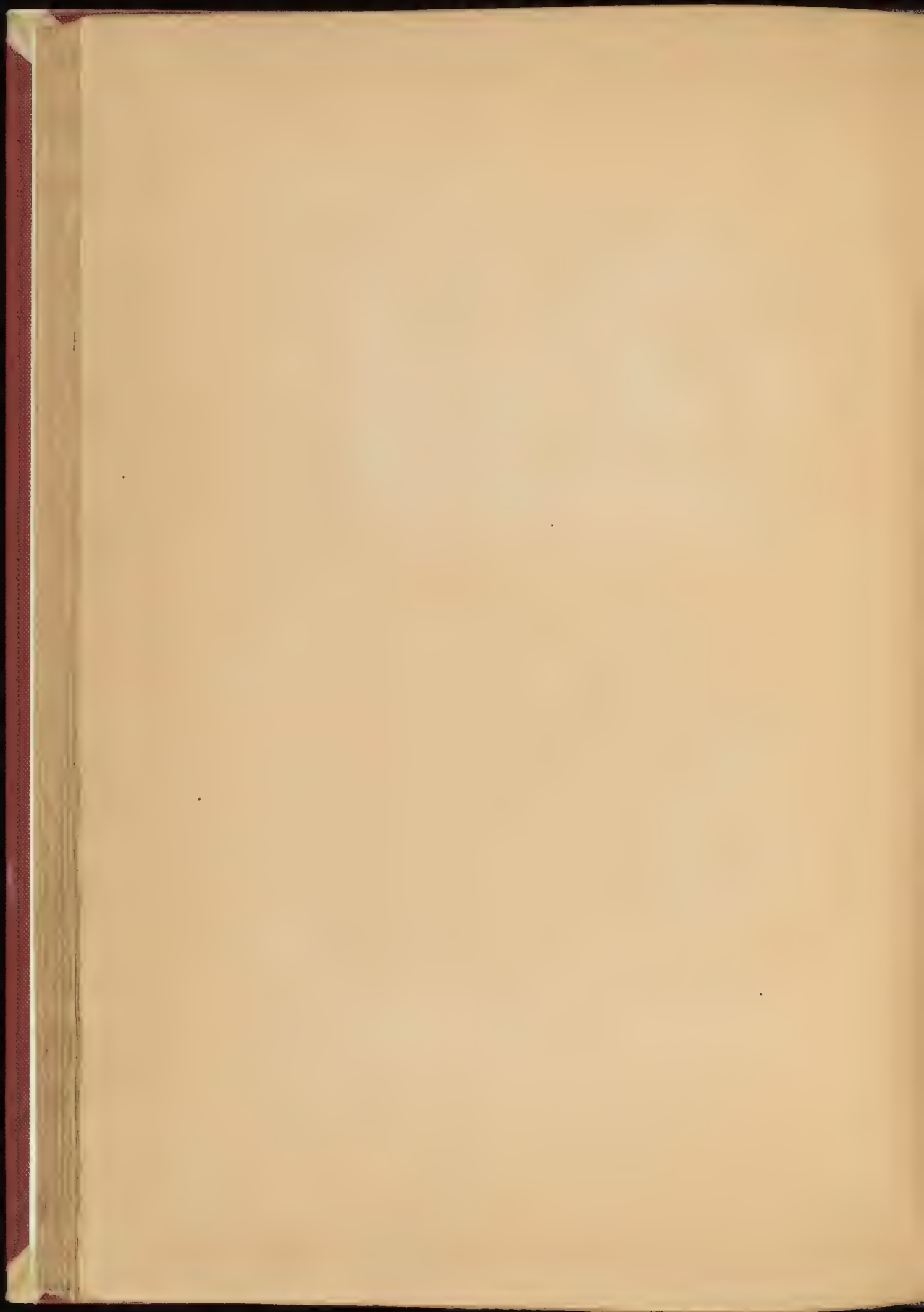














HENRI BARON



The life of M. Henri Baron is curious in as much as it commences with that of wood engraving and resumes all the improvements that this process has obtained. It also offers this peculiarity, that it cannot be separated from that of the great painter Français, one of the glories of modern landscape art. It also calls up an animated, feverish, enthusiastic and lively corner of this nineteenth century, that is supposing a century has corners. Royer-Collard did not think so, as is proved by the following. In an academical reunion they were discussing as to the admission of a word in their dictionary. Some were for, others against it. Among the latter was Cousin.

"But," one of his contradictors objected, "Molière himself made use of the word."

"Molière! Molière!" exclaimed the platonic lover of M^{me} de Longueville, "what of that! Because a word is found wandering about in a corner of Molière, what does that prove?"

"Monsieur Cousin," immediately answered Royer-Collard, "know that Molière has no corners!"



M. Henri Baron, to whom we will return, was born at Besançon in 1817. His family intended him for a commercial life, but his inclination carried him towards art. For once fancy overcame reality and the young man obtained from his parents the permission to go to Paris. He had a sufficiently marked aptness for drawing, whereas any conception of painting was entirely wanting. However he did not fear the issue. Bearer of a letter of recommendation, he presented himself, at the outset, to Jean Gigoux, who came from the same city that gave birth to Victor Hugo, whose name was then commencing to acquire celebrity. Jean Gigoux received him cordially and at once admitted him amongst his pupils, who

were, at that time, François and Elmerich. Later Faustin Besson, Hanteau and Bonvin joined the group. Jean Gigoux gave excellent advice to his pupils. He had broken away from academic traditions and, impelled by a desire for something new and unforeseen, he pressed forward, already having a presentiment of the naturalism that was to revolutionize the art of painting. He possessed the passion of the hollanders and venetians. Thus his efforts were exerted to make his competitors share with him the sentiments that he experienced. M. Henri Baron, timid, nervous and impressionable, and with this having a womanly sweetness and

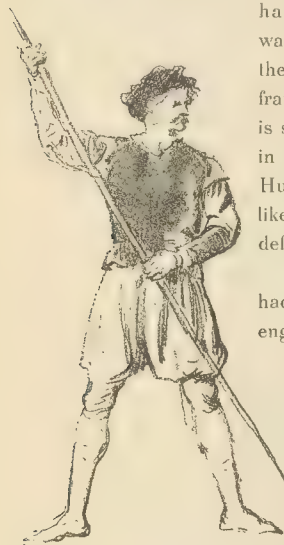
delicacy, became intimate — by love of contrast doubtless, — from the beginning with Français, who, built like a giant and gayer than any one else, was a good fellow always laughing in spite of the misery that followed at his heels. A friendship that has lasted and whose golden wedding might be celebrated, for it has continued fifty years and death alone will break the bond. These two men have riveted their hearts together with a chain as in olden times the Gallic "saldunes" united their wrists in the same shackle, fighting together and dying on the same heap of enemies. Français and Henri Baron have struggled against everything, and

have always found themselves

fraternally united in joy as in sorrow. There is something touching as well as comforting in this affection between two choice minds. Humanity is often calumniated; but natures, like these two that we describe, there are to defend and revenge her.

I said a while ago that M. Henri Baron had commenced at the same time as wood-engraving — I mean as the wood-engraving of this century. — To be exact: About 1834, painting was as yet but the domain of a few artists of note. There were indeed Ingres, Delaroche, Scheffer, all very academic but not susceptible of creating enthusiasms; there was also Horace Vernet who was the most popular. Be-

sides there were Delacroix, Decamps, and Isabey, agitators of new ideas, already in a state of insurrection against the schools, and by reason of



this much discussed and in disgrace. It was towards these that Français and his Pylades turned. They learnt to know and admire them, whilst

they waited until they should have the honor to be called upon to reproduce them on wood or stone.

Jean Gigoux, rather romantic, deeply interested in the new theories that were floating about, kept up his pupils' interest and the atelier resounded with fragments of discussion and heated arguments.

During this time, M. Henri Baron, who was endowed with rare faculties, studied drawing closely and produced with spirit charming sketches distinguished in color and happily arranged.

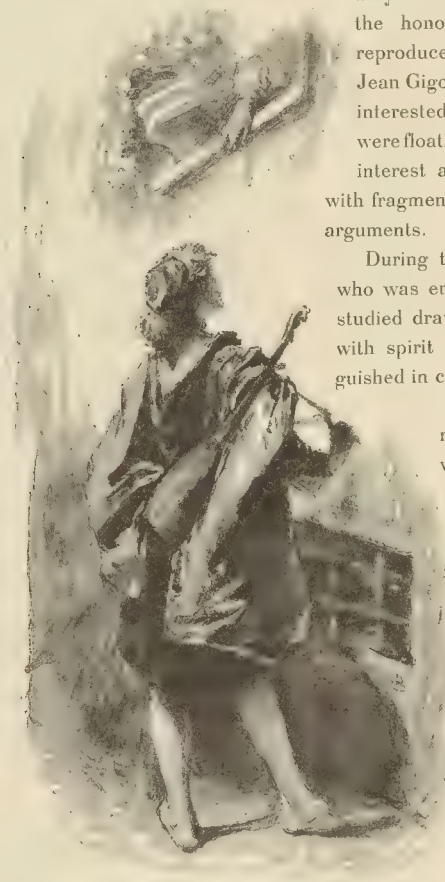
The atelier was situated rue Saint-André-des-Arts, where later the bookstore of

Furne was installed.

Jean Gigoux there made the illustrations for "Gil Blas," more human than picturesque, but that contain the flavor of an epoch entirely devoted to literature and art. They gained but little money; only ten francs were paid for drawings for the "Magasin pittoresque" or for

foreign publications! What hard times those were about 1830!

Sundays, days to be marked with a white stone, were happy times in the home of Henri Baron's father. The turkey stuffed with chestnuts that



graced the table quickly disappeared before the attacks made upon it, by the son of the house, Français, Elmerich and Jean Gigoux. Français and Jean Gigoux had particularly ferocious appetites. Just think! Français could have felled an ox with a blow of his fist, and Jean Gigoux, formerly a blacksmith, had retained all the strength and the unsatiated appetite of his first employment. Yes, Jean Gigoux, who was to become a very interesting figure, rose from the anvil as Veillot had from casks; and, strange coincidence, his pupil Elmerich, whose family lived near Besançon, took the horses to Jean Gigoux to be shod, for he was a clever workman. What strange commencements some men have in their career, and how strong their vocation must be to overcome and conquer such obstacles!

But to return to Jean Gigoux's atelier, that atelier where of evenings under the master's direction, who had an enterprise for illustrations in wood and in lithography, our young men tried their hand. Henri Baron was noted for the facility with which he at once seized the literary passage to be interpreted. Above all he possessed a prodigious memory that permitted him to reconstruct without any error of taste a popular scene, to fix a figure caught whilst sauntering or a historical subject seen in a museum.



1835 is a brilliant date in the life of M. Henri Baron; Jean Gigoux took him to Italy; Français could not accompany them and remained at Paris.

This journey of M. Henri Baron decided his future. At Venice and at Rome, he made sketches and studies, at the same time observing and storing up memories of all these seductive scenes, thus forming an artistic baggage of notes painted or drawn and impressions felt. Veronese in particular, that magic colorist, exercised an influence upon this youthful intelligence, an influence that manifested itself in fascinating copies that are still, I think, at

Jean Gigoux's house in the rue de Chateaubriand, which is filled with chefs-d'œuvre from the entrance to the upper stories. Jean Gigoux, who has always painted healthily, was a painter of light rather than a colorist. M. Henri Baron had the good judgment to fall neither into excess nor indifference between these two processes. He was able to find the happy medium that we have since seen in his ingenious genre pictures.

Here then in Italy, in the presence of the gods that he has wished to adore, and in spite of that, he is absent minded and sad; he does not fully enjoy the continual feast that the museums and palaces offer to his eyes. He thinks of the absent, of his companion in the struggle who has remained at Paris, and, too affectionate to be egotistical, he turns back upon himself as the pigeon in the fable, leaving Jean Gigoux to his labors



and his admirations. M. Henri Baron proved that one might have nostalgia for tenderness and affection. Everything smiled on him, nature and art, and nevertheless he was restless, disappointed in his dreams, preoccupied in his expectations. He doubted the present and feared the future. He longed for a strong heart to lean his head upon. "Save me!" he cried when he again saw Français. The next day he was again in his accustomed place at the work-table, and renewed his life by listening to the hearty laugh of his companion, who was proud of being in his own establishment and weighed down by the burden



of orders. Français had become head draughtsman for Curmer, he almost touched prosperity. Henri Baron profited by these unhopd for circumstances and became Français' assistant. It was at this epoch that they

illustrated the "History of France" by Deloye and that they became intimate with Nanteuil. But all this was not the longed for ideal, it was not painting. Ah! painting! Our two friends dreamed of it; M. Henri Baron applied himself and frequented Bougival. But Bougival without Français was not as attractive as the garret in the rue Childebert. Français, bound to Curmer, could not go beyond the fortifications of Paris. For there was constantly an ornamental letter to compose, a vignette to be imagined, a frontispiece to be created. Finally Curmer authorised Français to join M. Henri Baron, and then landscape had but to hold its own.

Bougival, in 1836, was like America before the coming of Christopher Columbus, a kind of virginal region with forest nooks and lakes lost in an enclosure of willows, in a setting of reeds. Français was wild with joy. He decked himself with verdure as the fauns did with grapes; his happiness verged on intoxication. Thus he accepted his friend's idea of a landscape painted by the two; Français undertook the right-hand part and Henri Baron the left side. Sainte-Claire-Deville, the chemist who died recently, was rustivating with them, and it was he who went to Paris to buy a five foot canvas and sufficient



colors to cover it. There were some slight faults in the harmony of this four-handed piece, as Français was seeking nature's secret and Henri Baron was working from chic. When the study was finished, our painters entered Paris and at once went to work on the picture. Only they continued the system instituted by Henri Baron. Français painted all the landscape; Henri Baron placed the figures, "after Carpaccio", as he said. The picture, called "Songs under the willows", figured at the Salon of 1837 and was sold for a thousand francs to Evrat, Curmer's printer. The study fell to Nanteuil.

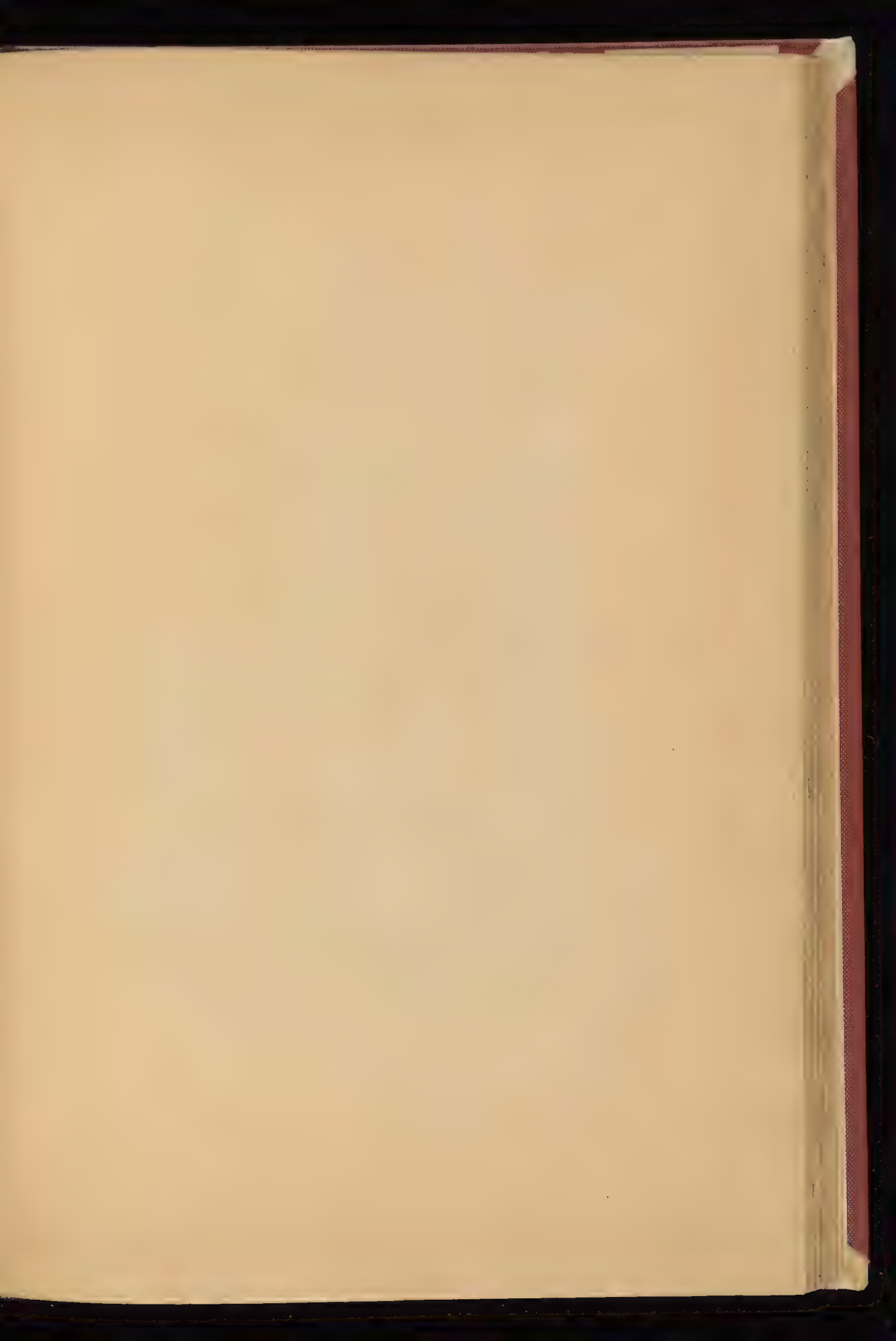
M. Henri Baron's circle gradually enlarged, his social relations increased; he counted some celebrated comrades, among others Decamps

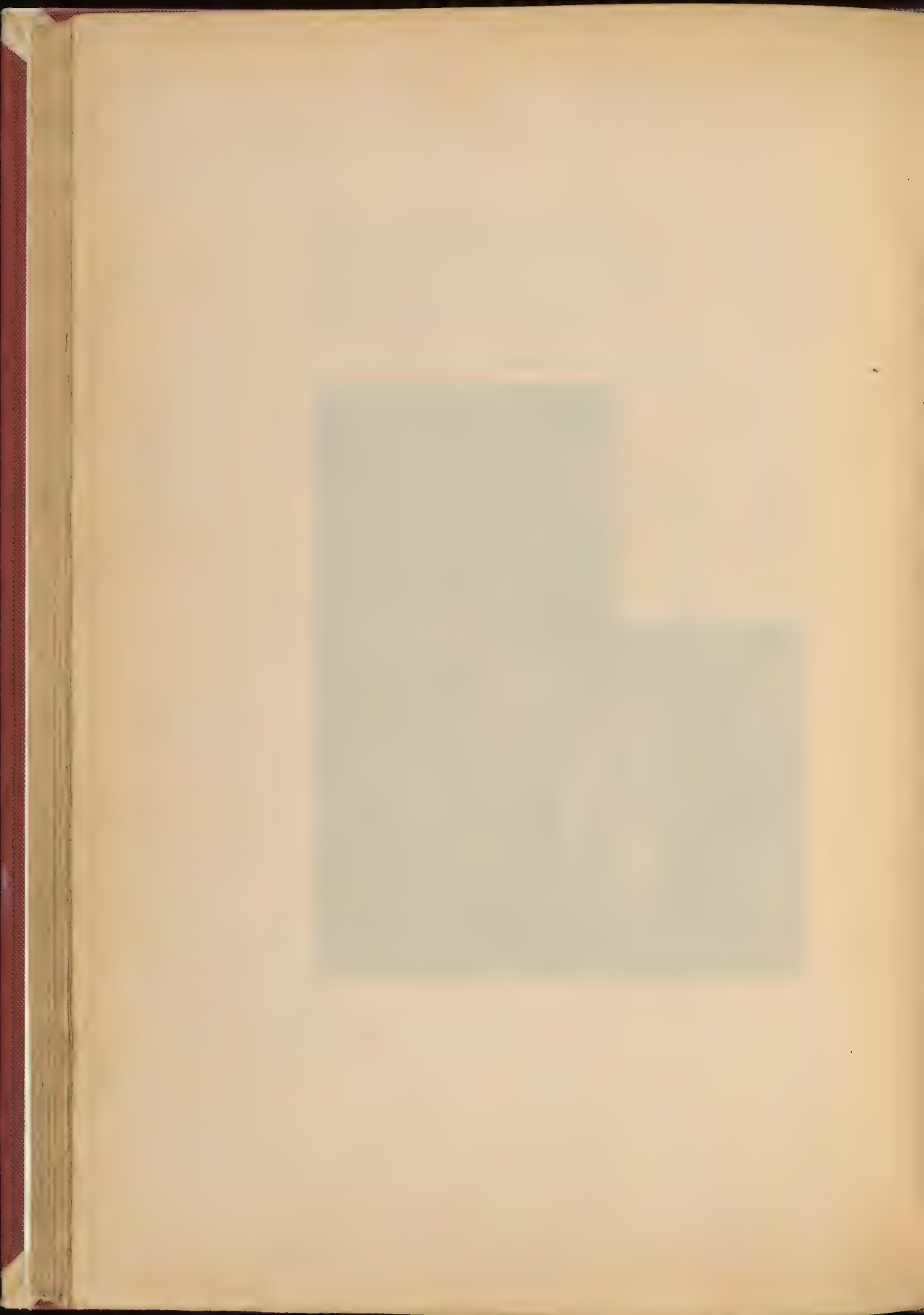
and Marilhat, who being colorists caused him to modify his manner of working. Besides he became associated with François, Moulleron, Leroux and Nanteuil, for the publication of the "Society of ancient and modern artists", whose aim consisted in reproducing by lithography the old masters and successful modern artists. Bertauts became the publisher of this Society, that left Albums not to be found at present.

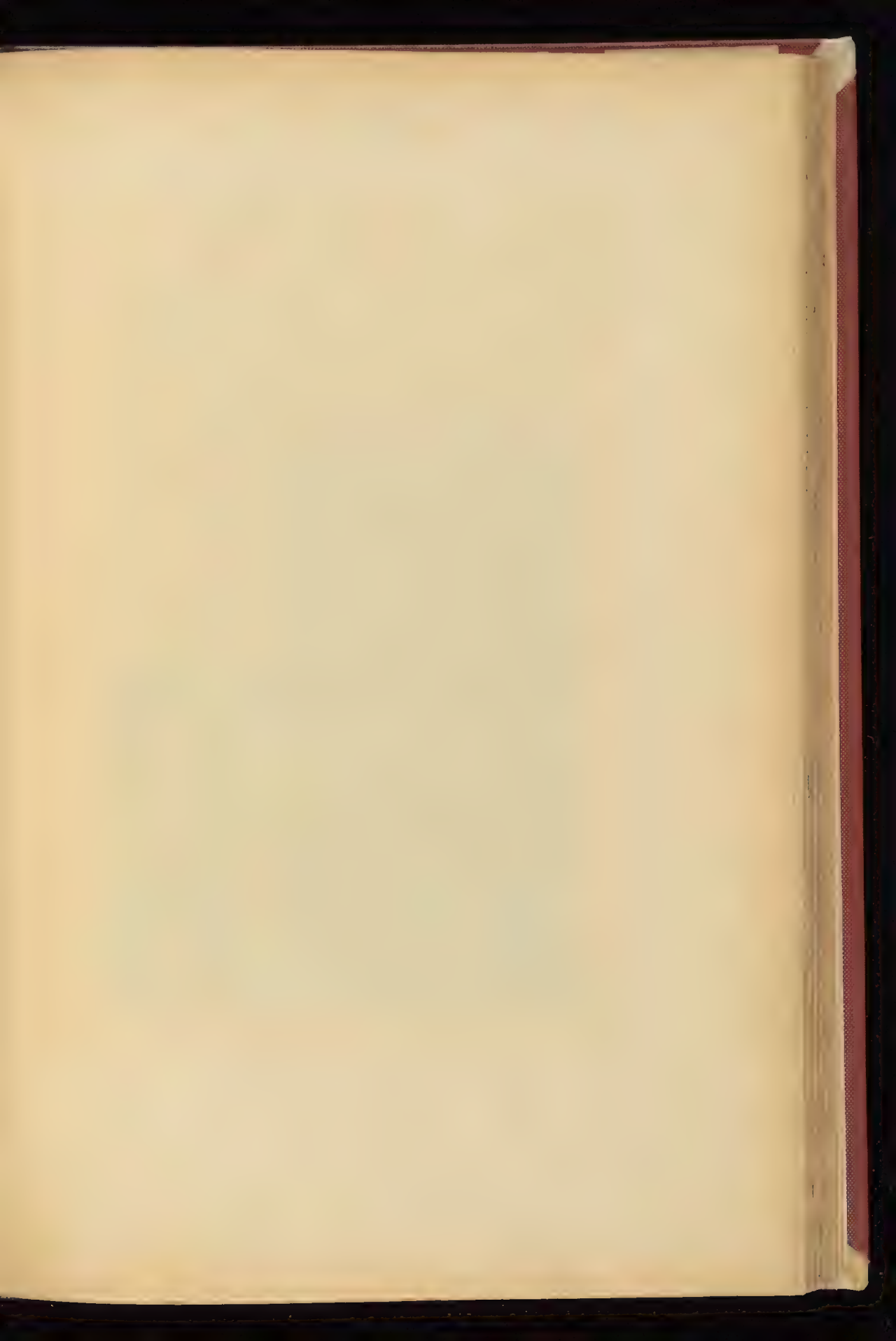
Here we have arrived at the full development of Henri Baron's talent as painter and water-colorist.

All the discoveries made will be utilised, all researches will serve, all the observations suggested by the sight of chefs-d'œuvre or created by nature will now be employed, not in enormous pages, in imposing compositions, for M. Henri Baron, who might have attempted such under-

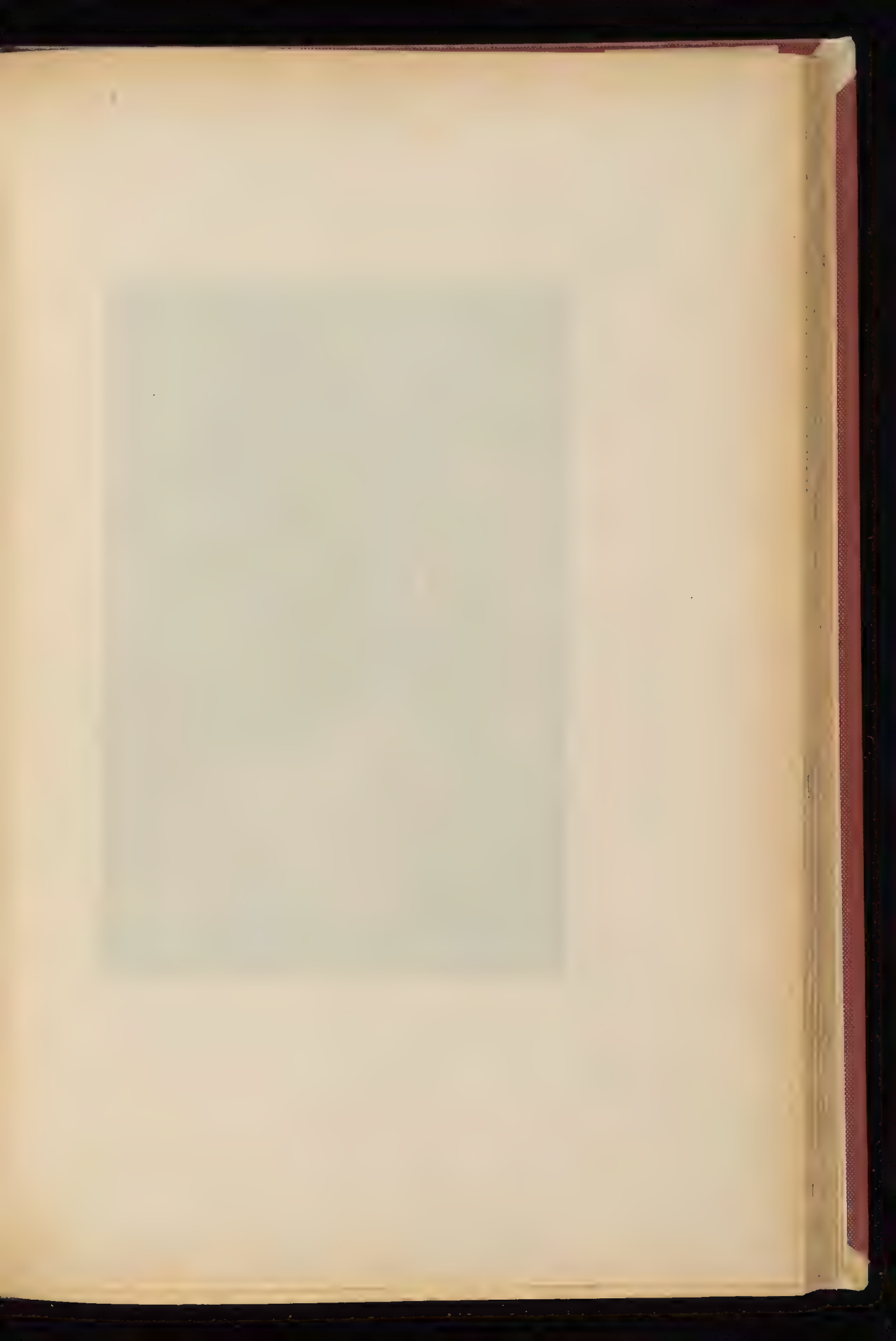






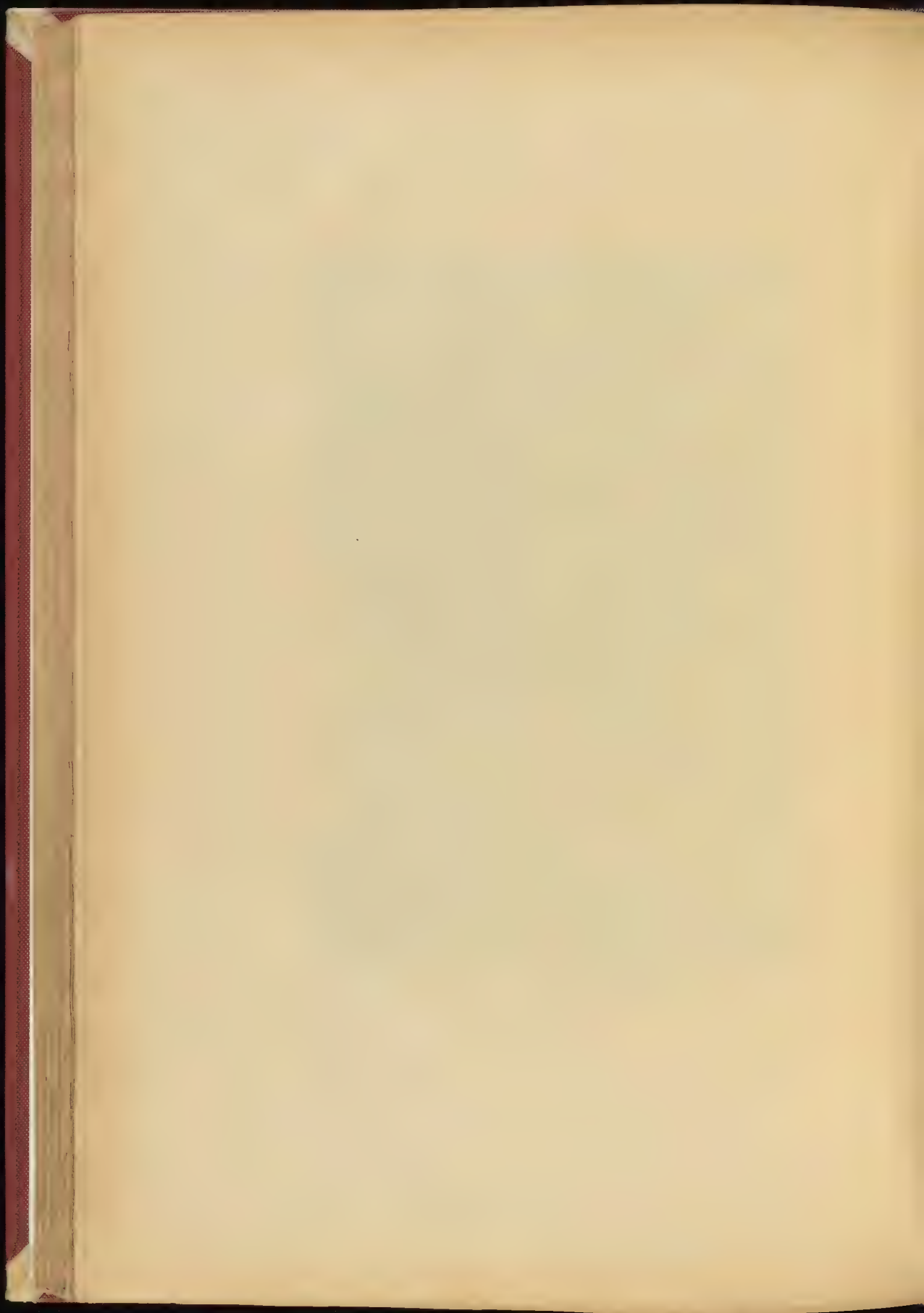


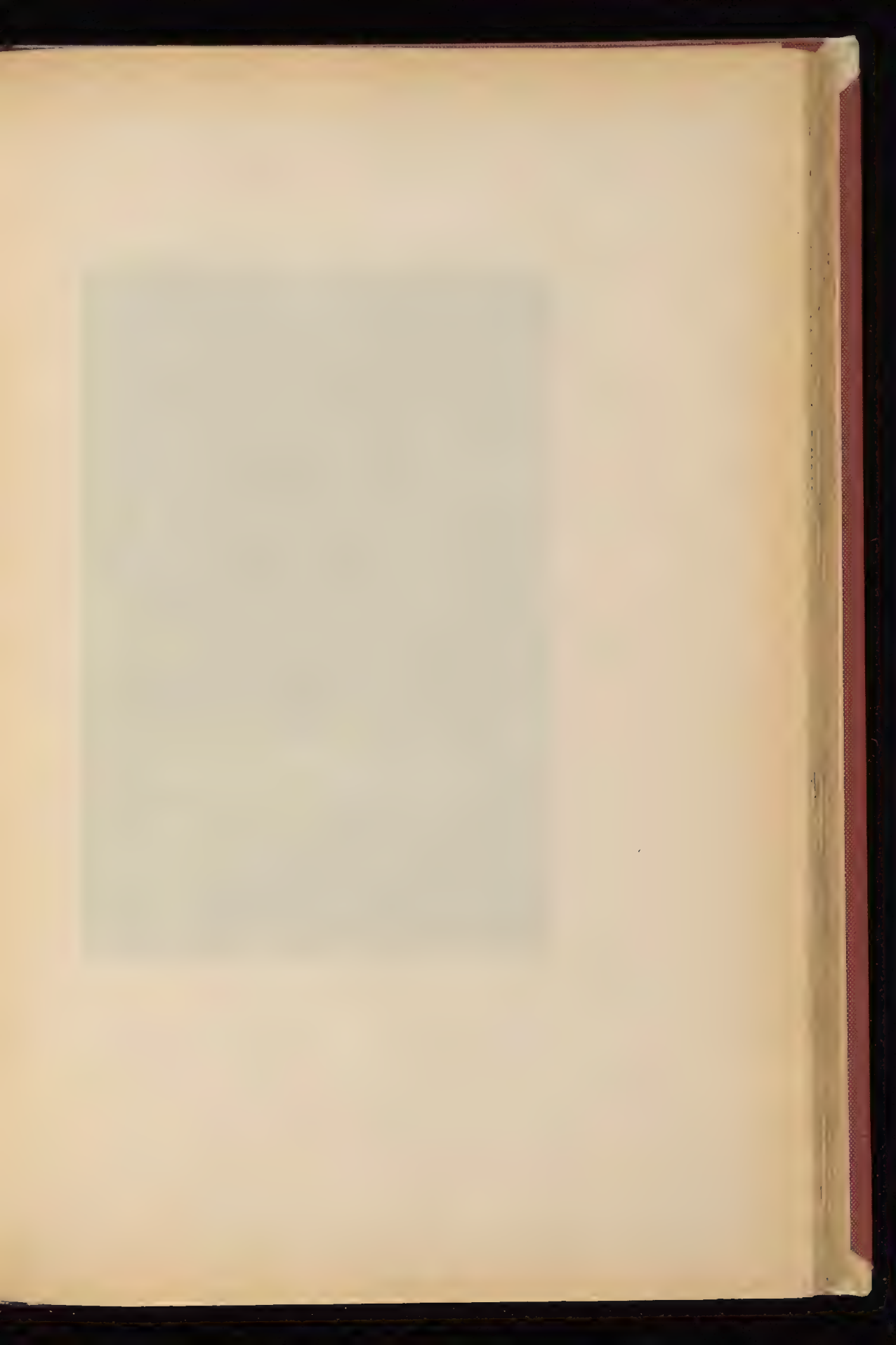


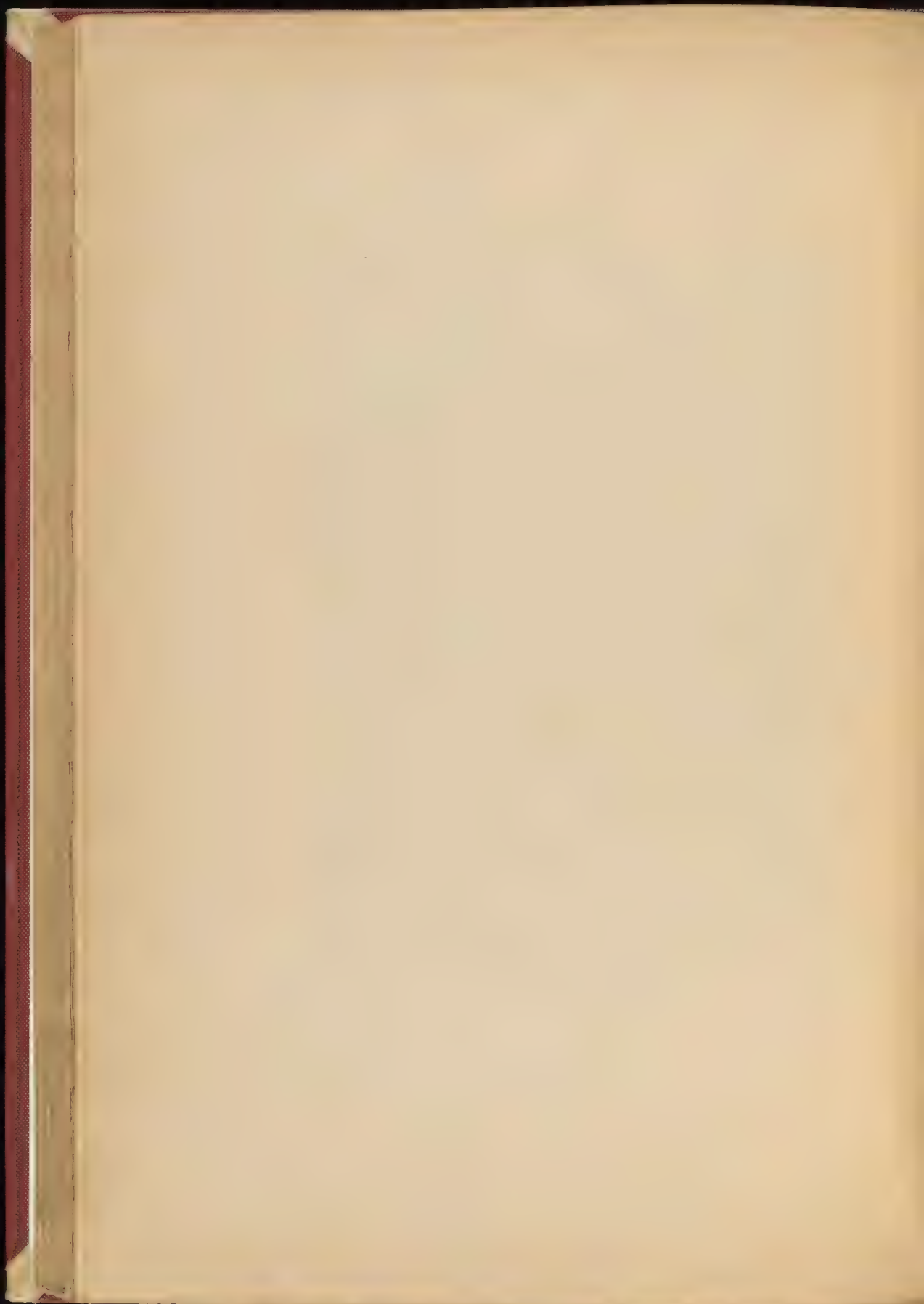


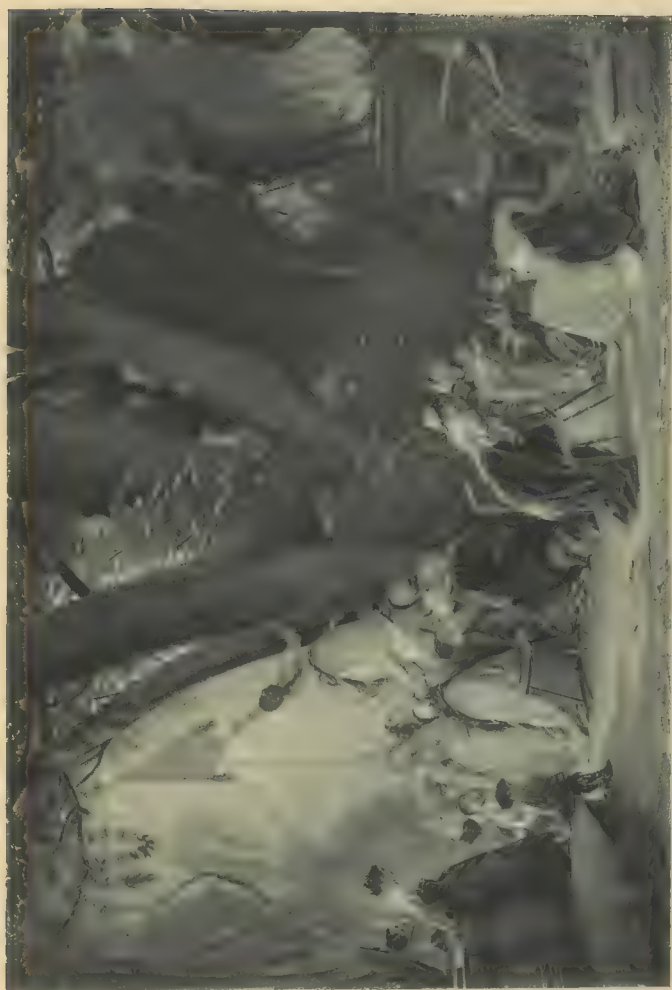


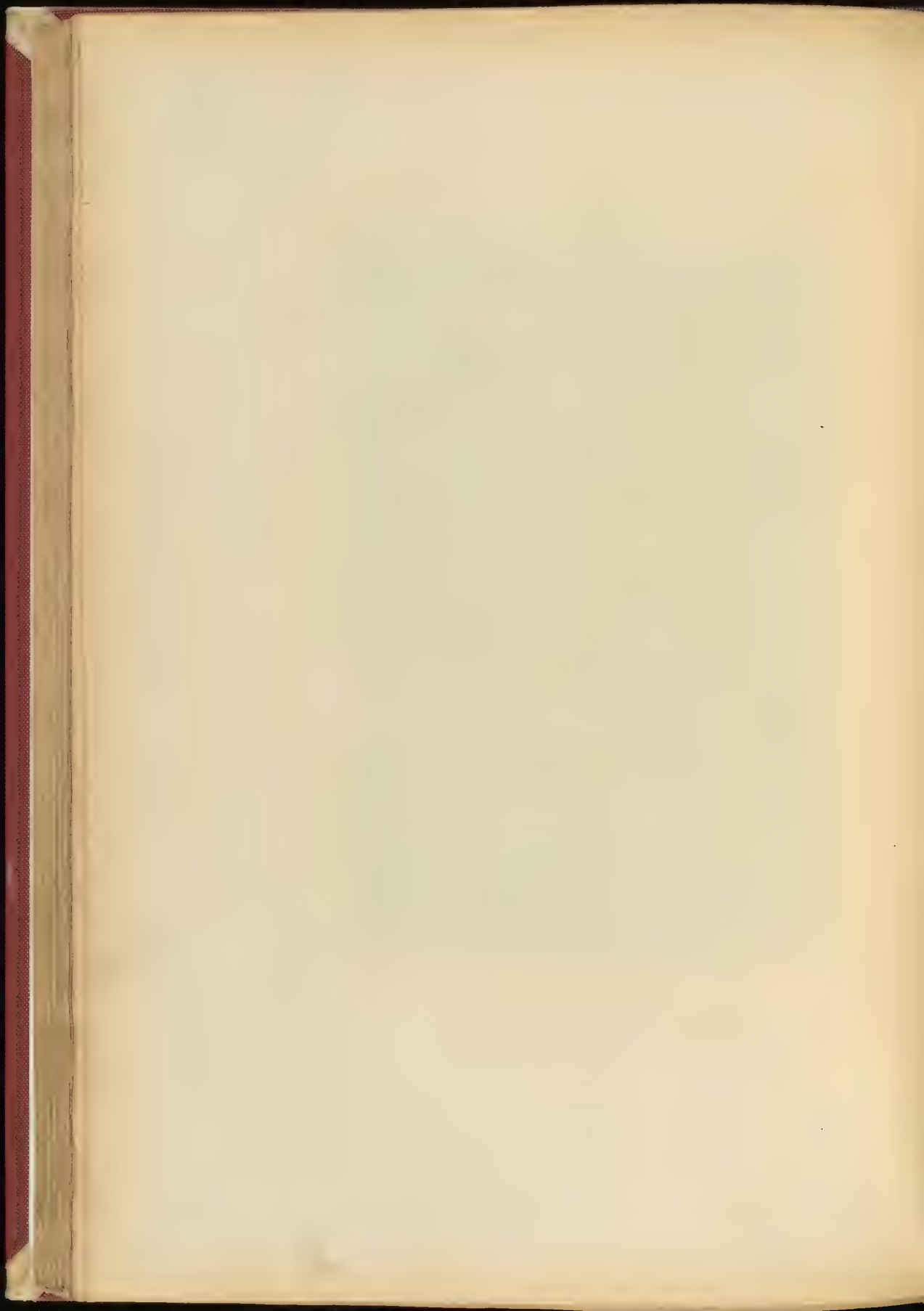




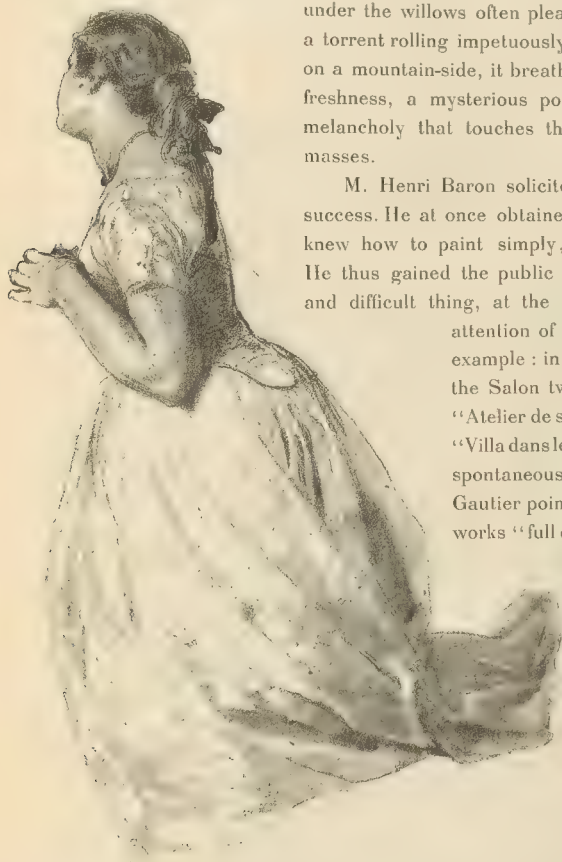








takings, contented himself by giving the quintessence of power in panels not larger than a hand, but not wanting in eloquence. A brook that meanders under the willows often pleases better than a torrent rolling impetuously over the rocks on a mountain-side, it breathes an adorable freshness, a mysterious poetry, a tender melancholy that touches the heart of the masses.



M. Henri Baron solicited this kind of success. He at once obtained it because he knew how to paint simply, but sincerely. He thus gained the public favor and, rare and difficult thing, at the same time the

attention of the critics. For example : in 1840 he sent to the Salon two canvases, an "Atelier de sculpteur" and a "Villa dans le pays latin", and spontaneously, Théophile Gautier pointed them out as works "full of sentiment and

color." Certainly, Théophile Gautier was not easily rendered enthusiastic, and he wrote as he thought. At once he consecrated the young painter

and drew upon him the attention of the crowd. Perhaps you will think that, proud of this baptism, the artist would be lulled to sleep on the heap of laurels that the divine Theo had cut in his honor? Not at all. Electrified by such an enviable support, he desired to render himself worthy; and

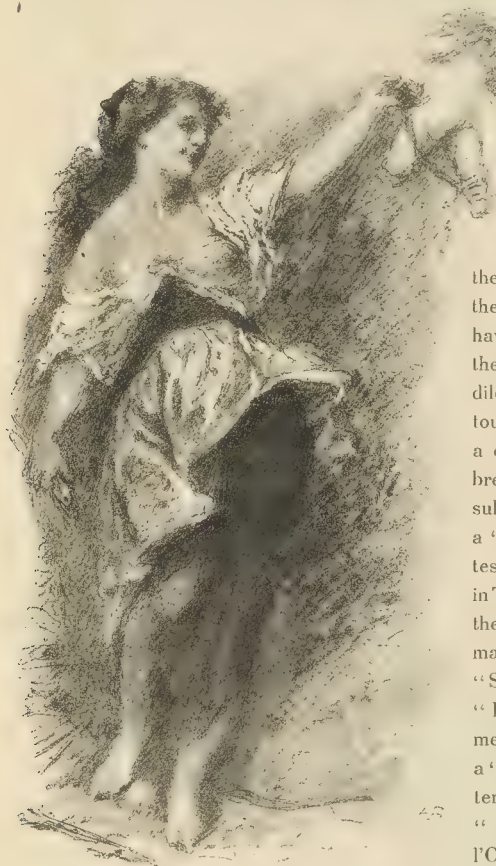
again leaving France he went to Italy, to ask from the cradle of sublime art the secrets of its impeccability. He returned from this exodus in 1842, reassured and more experienced, and "la Sieste en Italie" was applauded. In 1843 he exhibited some "Condottieri"; in 1844, "Giorgione faisant le portrait de Gaston de Foix".

Thoré, in 1845, occupied himself with M. Henri Baron. Here is what he wrote: "The little picture of M. Baron, 'les Oies de frère Philippe' is very coquettishly executed. M. Baron employs principally contrast in colors, as Clément Boulanger does, and like the school of Camille Roqueplan. The stuffs are variegated with transparent reflections, and the flesh tints are luminous as in Couture's pictures." And, two years later, by criticising certain points he stated his opinion more precisely. "M. Baron rather misuses reds and the proximity of clear colors; 'Le Pupitre de Palestrina' in particular too forcibly attracts the gaze. In 'Andrea del Sarto painting a fresco in the convent of the Annonciade, at Florence' the composition is arranged in a very picturesque manner; the painter and his model, his wife so fondly cherished, have mounted on the scaffolding to the height of the arch. He has already sketched in his madonna that will be a chef-d'œuvre. Around him two or three pupils are occupied in grinding colors and preparing brushes. This picture is on the left, in the middle of the little salon by the entrance. The 'Soirée d'été' seems to us preferable to the other two pictures of Baron. Here the sky and landscape aid the harmony. The little figures softly reclining in the park enjoy the freshness of the evening and the grass. It is a scene from Boccaccio, if you will, or a conversation of Lancret."



There is no mistaking the value of a man when, at his debuts, he is thus remarked. Do not forget that it is forty years between these judgments and the time of this writing. The critics who pronounced thus joined to the superiority of form the authority of judgment. — More than once they have formed this judgment that has become the evangel of the ignorant, and

in the unknown where they wander, they probably hear the consecration of the truths that they have manifested during their brilliant but too short career. Encouraged by these warm appreciative words, M. Henri Baron pen-



etrated more boldly into the domain which he had shaped for himself. He is a painter of small genre and anecdotic pictures. But to

these forms of art that the most illustrious have known, he adds the refined taste of a dilettante. There is a touch of the madrigal, a dash of gallantry, a breath of passion in his subjects. They are first a "Child sold by pirates" and "Springtime in Tuscany" (1848); then the "Noces de Gamache" (1849), the "Skaters", "Fishing" "Départ pour la promenade" (1852); or again a "Repaire", a "Painter in his atelier" (1853), "le Toucher" and "l'Ouïe" (1855), for the

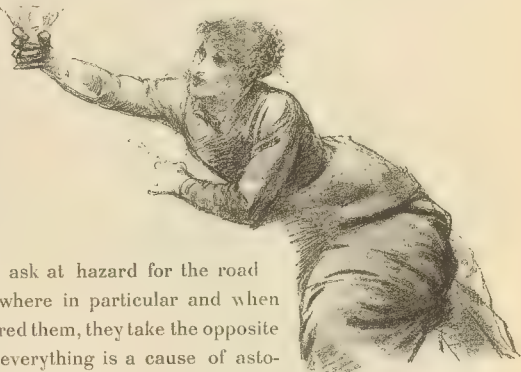
minister of the Interior, "Vendanges en Romagne" and the "Bouquet."

M. Henri Baron's work is abundant and very varied; he endeavors to know and express everything, employing to obtain success grace, elegance,

the fanciful and picturesque. He seems in this sense to belong to the group of painters of small canvases of the eighteenth century, who in amusing themselves gave utterance to so many correct axioms, translating so many intelligent paradoxes, going from church to court and from the court to the bedside of some queen of wit and beauty. They were strange natures, these painters whose works are so highly valued to-day, I understand; more, I will add that I approve of those who strive in imitating to cause them to live again. These imitators take nothing from tradition. They pay homage in passing to the academies and tombs. What am I saying? hypogeums where slowly perish, under the weight of fetters, the humorists and independents that have adventured there. Like a bird my heroes rest on the end of a branch, they inhale the perfumes of may, become intoxicated with the light, sun, liberty; they ask at hazard for the road that leads to no-where in particular and when hazard has answered them, they take the opposite way. With them everything is a cause of astonishment, calling forth exclamations. They hold in horror the straight line that breaks the attractive horizon line or troubles perfectly established harmonies. This is why they are so loved, that fatted calves are killed to celebrate the return of these prodigal children of imagination.

M. Henri Baron has held a place in this company, he also has made excursions into ideal realms with a conscientiousness that would disarm the severest captain. These are so many peremptory reasons that we should love him without having ever approached him! Judge then what it would be if our hand had but touched his!

This art of M. Henri Baron is so delicate and refined that it delights the most fastidious. It is manifested in scenes "gay, animated with figures of charming freeness, bright-colored stuffs with glancing reflections; with joy, life, light, youth and grace". Such are the qualities of M. Henri Baron,



adds the anonymous writer from whom we borrow the preceding eulogy. M. Henri Baron has, in truth, been the contemporary of Devéria, Johannot, Roqueplan; those chroniclers of the brush who threw into their canvases all the spirit that writers of a romantic cycle have made to live again.

Historical romance has fed historical painting; Walter Scott, Mignet, Mérimée and Augustin Thierry have taken part in the advance of pictorial art. The modernity in art, a taste for which has lately arisen, has many attractions, but also what infatuation painters find in describing the side-scenes of brilliant epochs that were animated by the splendor of costumes, the brightness of waving plumes! These accomplish the work of a restorer, they take part in the brilliant restitution of their archaism. They take a world of trouble to deck out a personage, to compose a scene

or to work up a situation, they exhume from the dust of ages certain facts almost effaced and thanks to their brush bring to the surface and animate them with new brilliancy. M. Henri Baron excels in this style. Was it not in reference to him that Paul de Saint-Victor pencilled this piquant judgment: — "It must be that he paints in lace ruffles as M. de Buffon writes. He is passionately fond of rich costumes and marvel-



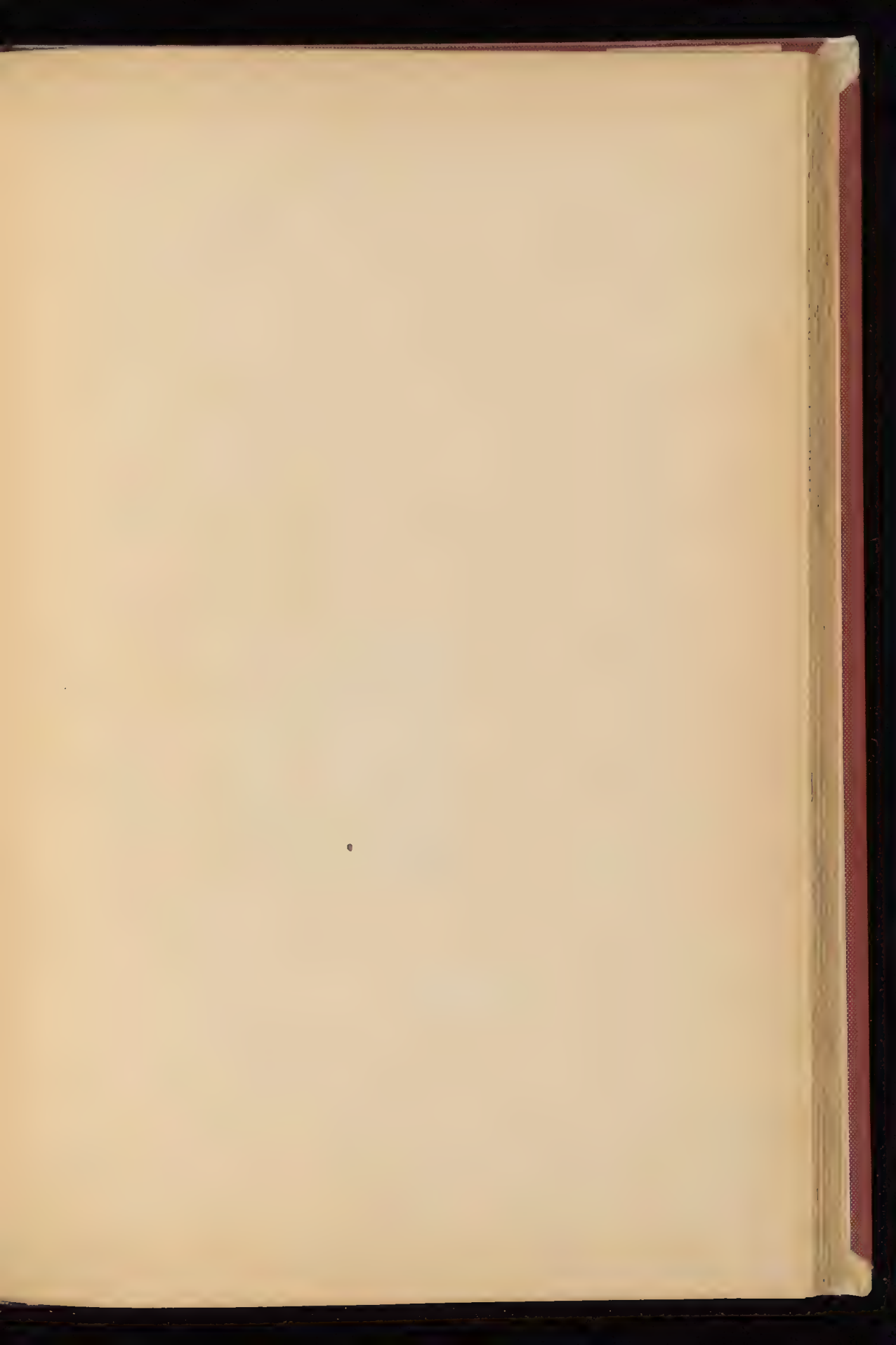
lous toilettes, he places his touches with the coquetry of an abigail putting a patch on her mistress' lip." One calls for a wolf in reading of the sheep-folds of Florian; one would pay a heavy price for a woolen dress or a bit of serge in the pictures of M. Baron.

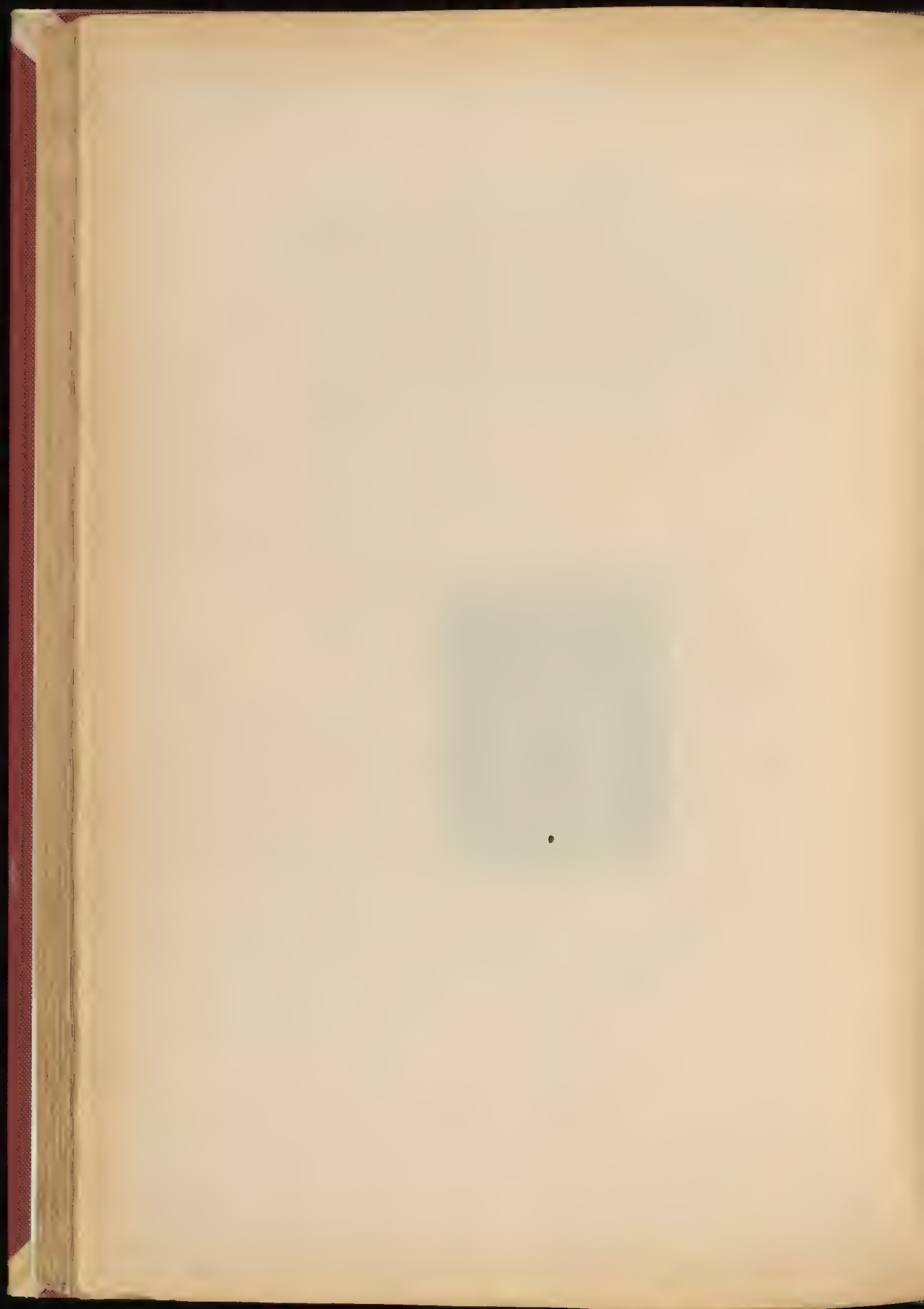
I have shown the painter, and have tried to analyse the man through the heart of his friend Français. As a man he has had cruel moments to live through. He has known all the agonies of the fight and has surmounted them; he was then justified in hoping that he would be spared other trials; calm had entered into his being, he tasted the savor of life side by side with the worthy companion that heaven had given; his children grew up distinguished, charming, formed by him. It was too great happiness for a human being; fatality descended upon the wrestler,

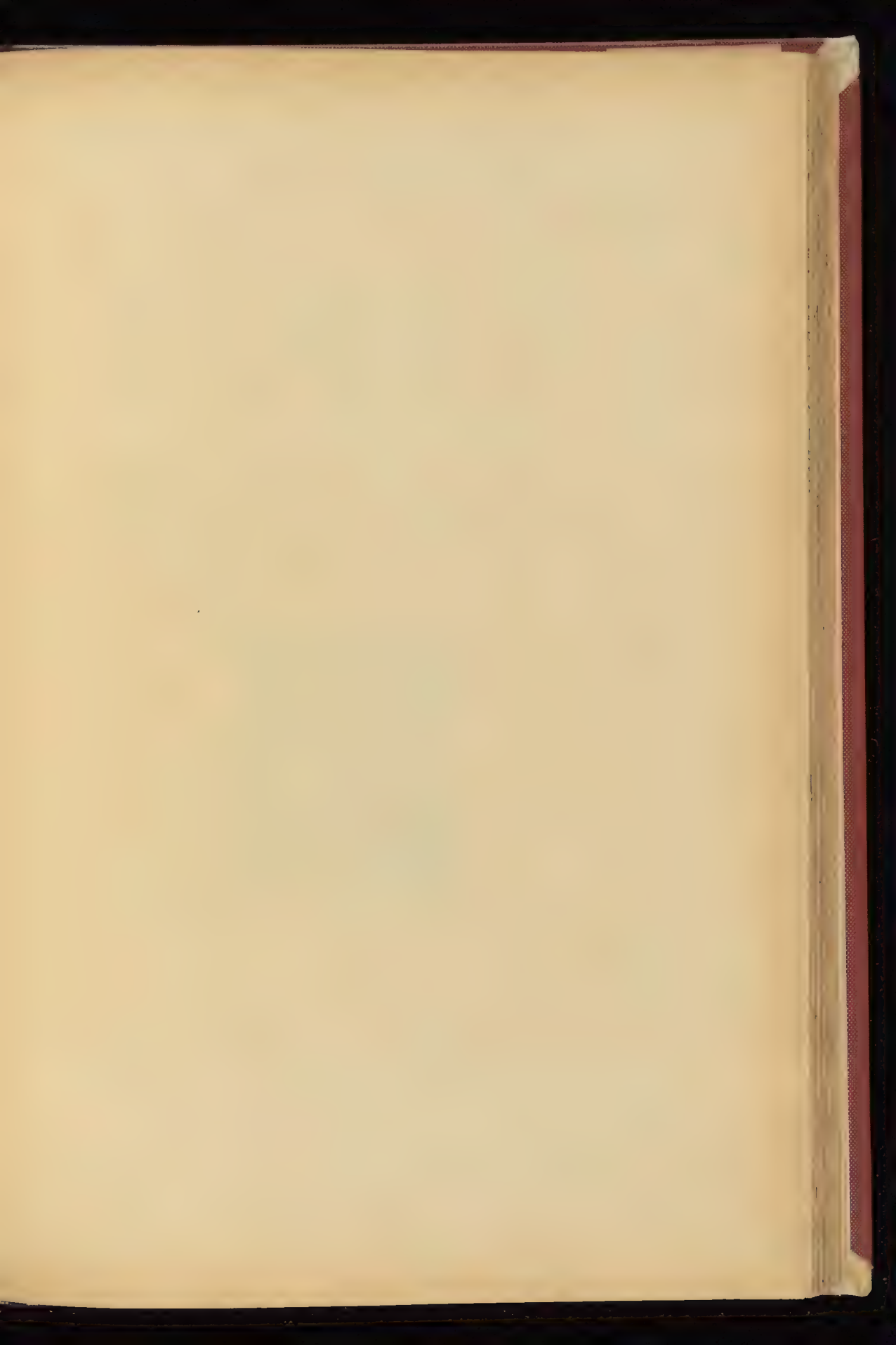
taking from him his better self, his wife, and if he had not felt the responsibility of his children, such a shock would have crushed him. He was enabled to bear up for his daughter's sake, but the brush has fallen from his hand and an incurable melancholy has taken possession of his mind; he lives at Geneva, with the dear ones remaining, shadowed by griefs as incurable as his, but also having, sovereign remedy, little ones playing about that are reminders of departed joys. A young girl is the touching Antigone of this artist stricken down amid his dreams, and whose griefs are soothed by fragments from Mozart or some airs of Palestrina!

EUGENE MONTROSIER

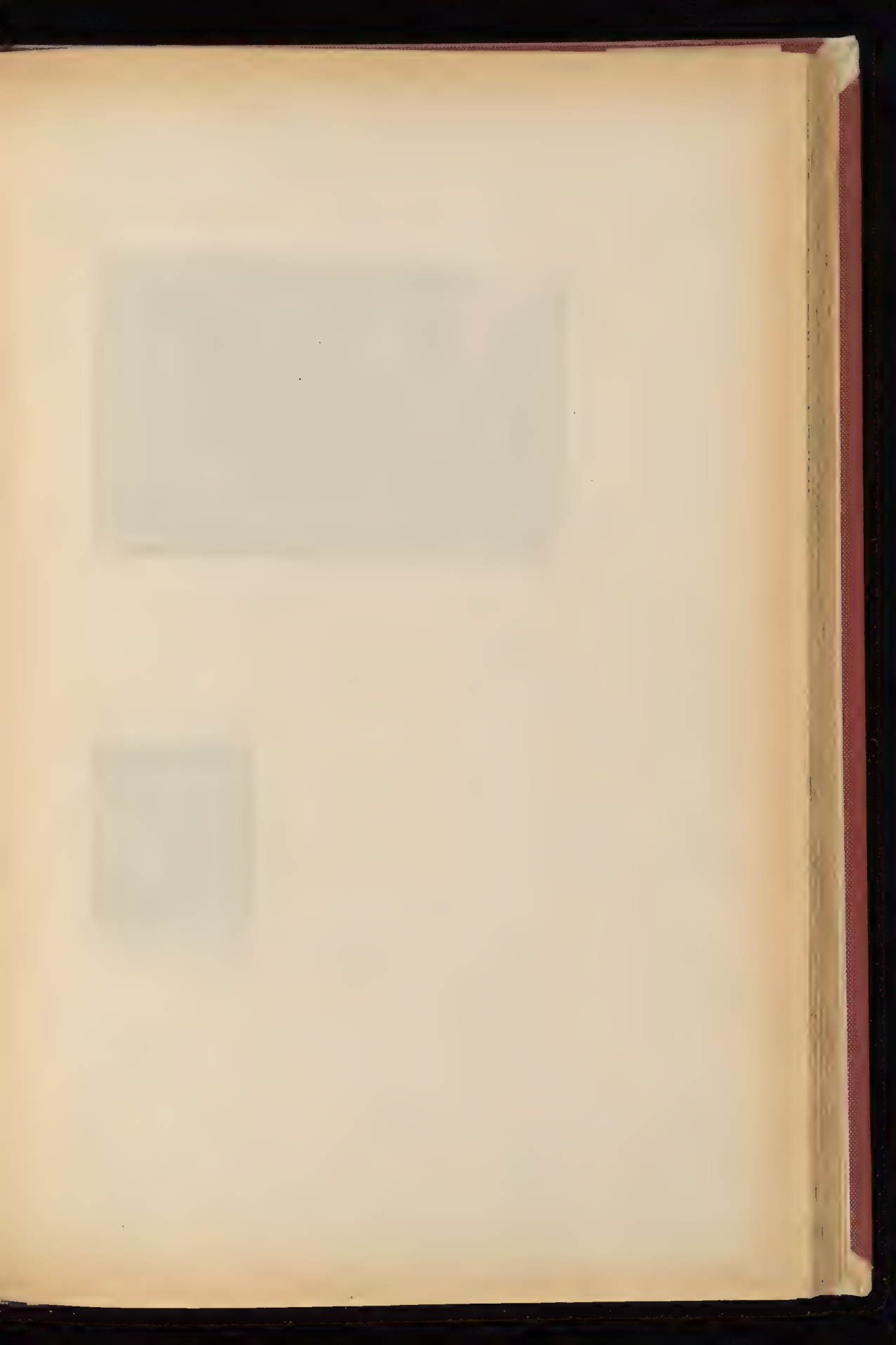






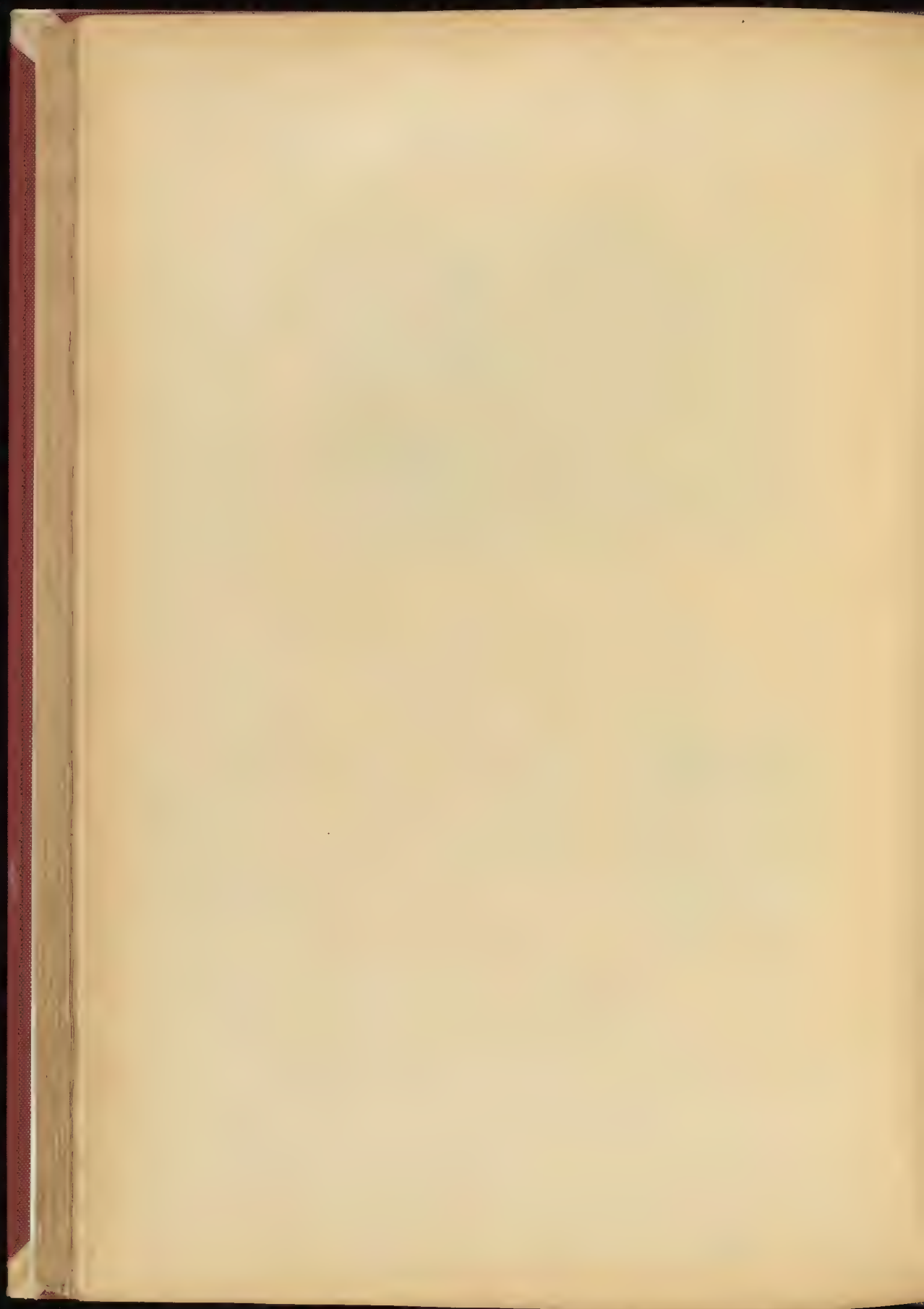




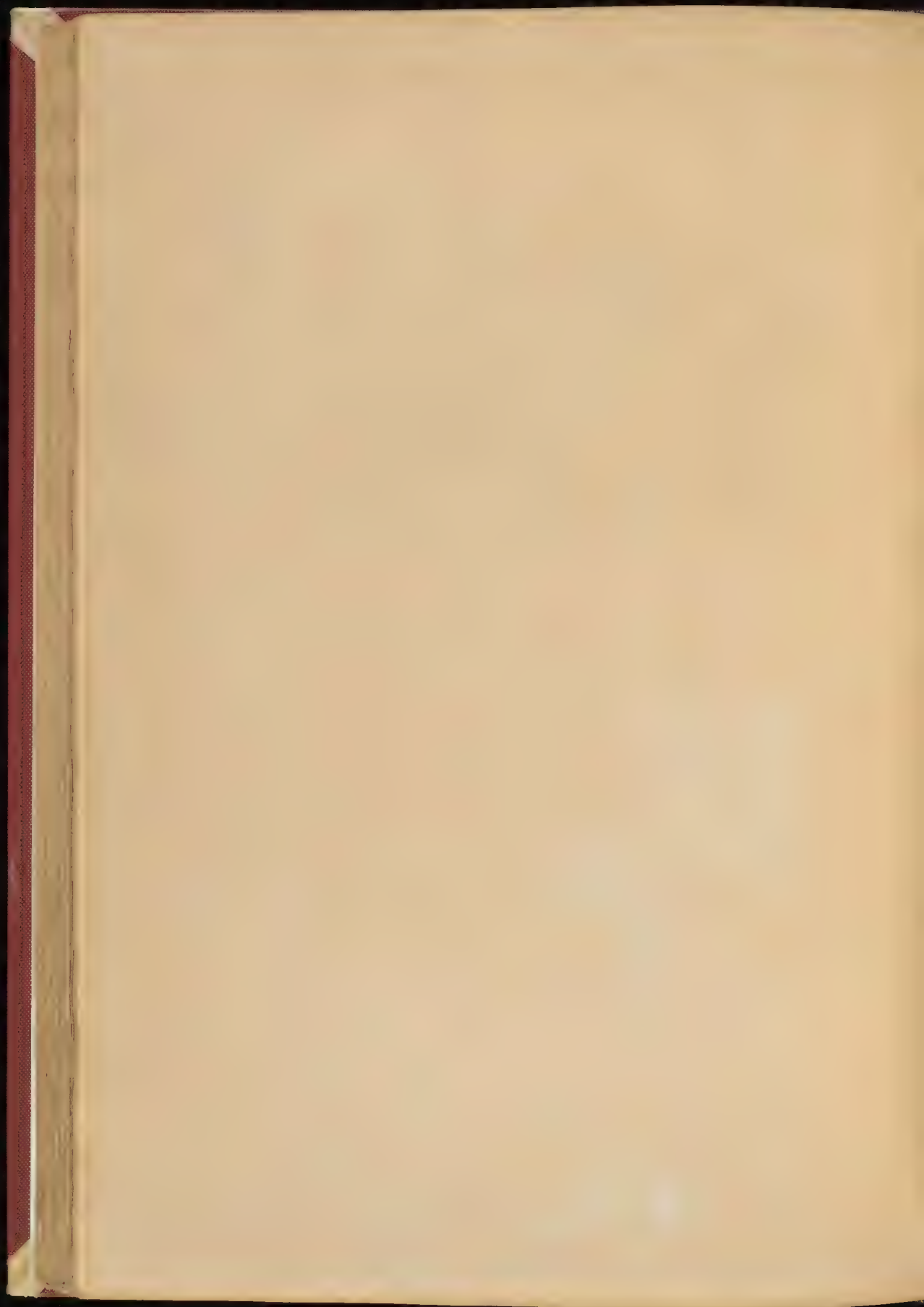














EUGÈNE ISABEY



There are two kinds of artists : the original characters, who make their own roads, and the impersonal characters, who walk in tracks already beaten. The first, whether little or great, leave creations stamped with their mark to posterity; the others only leave what they have appropriated more or less adroitly and skilfully of known formulas. Eugene Isabey reports himself among the first kind. His talent proceeds from himself alone. No one has furnished him with a model to imitate; what he knows is not borrowed from any routine of instruction; what he does is the product of his proper effort and comes of his own funds. He is rightfully reputed a painter of the race of painters, of an ardent and supple imagination,

and an exuberant colorist in the perfectly french style he has invented. One thing strikes me about him; he is unique, without connexion with



the past, and without any possible follower to continue his line; nobody could resemble him but in copying him; he must have been born from nothingness, and have finished his kind of art in his own



person. Quite different are the alchemist's laboratories that the master delights to paint in all their strangeness. He shows us the seekers after the philosopher's stone blowing their furnace fires, or reading in big fatidical *in-folios*. The mysterious instruments of the occult science are scattered around them:

matrass, retorts, alembics, bocals, stuffed owls and animal's skeletons. The walls and ceilings are blackened by smoke. It is in such crucibles that the disciples of Paracelsus and Raymond Lulle delight to operate the transmutation of metals and the artist has naturally found pure gold on his palette. The baron's wars, highway adventures, besieged cities that are being loudly summoned to surrender by herald's preceded by blazoned pennons and trumpeters, wild feastings, the picturesque manor-houses, cathedral processions, amidst the glistening organ reeds, lordly betrothments, royal entrances, duels, the departure of princely hunting-parties from Louis XIII castles with vane capped slated roofs, such are his usual accessories. He has even painted the blessing of a pack of hounds by a bishop assisted by all his clergy. His paradoxes are



without limit and his flaming ingeniousness justifies even these excesses. At présent I will briefly resume my opinion of Eugène Isabey without embarrassment or ambiguity.



Eugène Isabey, painter of marine and character subjects as well as water-color artist, and the object of this notice, had for father the unrivalled miniaturist Jean-Baptiste Isabey. He is indebted to the paternal source for his energy, his spontaneity, his confidence, his vivacity of mind, his warmth of blood. The two lives are similar in this important point — felicity. The talent of the two is different; the son shows a more salient originality, but the principle of conduct is the same for one as for the other, and, in the profession of painting,

one would say that the advice of Mirabeau, given to the father, has been the rule of the son : " Better be the first man in one style than fear to be less than the first in another. "

It was at Paris that he came into the world, in 1830. In Paris he grew up. He is a Parisian, of the most unmixed temperament. If he ever goes away from the great city it is in the hope of coming back again. The tumult and turbulence and much ado of Paris are a necessity of his life. He has germinated in the heart of the bustle, as a wild plant in the strength of the wind. They gave him instructors, but he did what he pleased to do.



As a child he talked of being a sailor. A little later, he wished to study surgery. " Do as you will, my son ", his father said, " You will end by being a painter ". Eugène, however, when he reached his seventeenth year, knew nothing

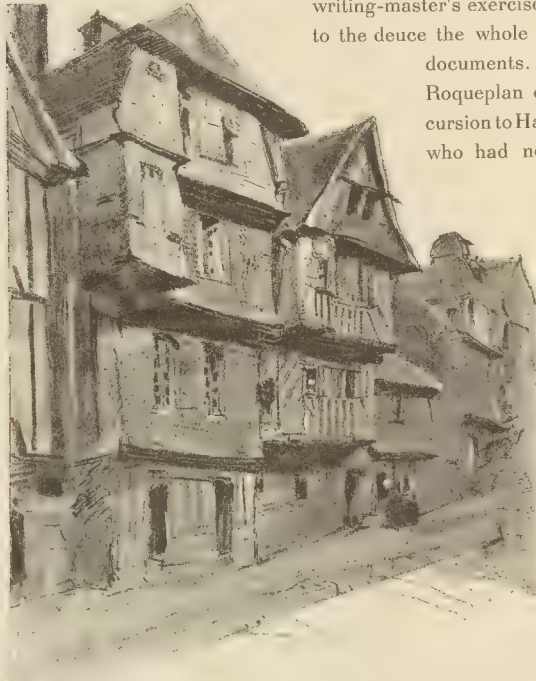
yet of art. Several of his comrades, in the meantime, Bonington, Roqueplan and others, devoted themselves to painting; and he determined to be neither sailor nor surgeon. He begged his father to teach him drawing. The answer of the miniature-painter was to hand him a set of engravings after Flaxmann, to be copied line for line. Can we imagine young Isabey wearing out his eyes in tracing stroke by stroke these

writing-master's exercises? He soon sent to the deuce the whole bundle of classic

documents. Bonington and Roqueplan organized an excursion to Havre; and Eugène, who had not yet touched a brush, procured a box of colors and followed them.

At Havre he was daunted at nothing, he planted his easel in the sand before a bit of sea-beach which pleased him, and began to skirmish over the white canvas. He set the palette which was on his

thumb as nearly as he could like those he had seen. He knew nothing of the trade, but so much the better, he made out a fashion of his own. He ventured his paints boldly, and dabbled joyously among his mixtures. He achieved the strangest of marine paintings, one where the waves were not frizzled like a dandy's hair, where there were no cyclopean rocks piled up to aid the Titans to scale the heavens, no classical ruins, no



triremes carrying Cæsar and his fortunes, or Cleopatra and her loveliness. Such monstrous licence proved that he had never frequented the academies. Yet a simple bits of sea-beach has its rights. Only see how the radiant sky enfolds it, how the feline caress of the ocean touches it softly! The breeze wanders at large, and fills the lungs with its life-giving, salt breath. You are happy, for everything calms your mind and stimulates your dreams. The novice seemed to hear, while working, voices of encouragement and counsel in the air. "Novice, please yourself! Painting, which is nothing but suffering for so many, shall be nothing but delight for you. Only obey your caprices, follow your inspiration, and do as you like!" Little by little his palette became crammed with colors; as fast as he worked, it grew more miraculously iridescent. Bonington came up and contemplated the work. What was this? Who has been telling the boy all the secrets of the colorist? How



has he been getting his effects? This cheery, unctuous kind of painting, this sparkling and ebullient style, this gentle love-making of the palette, has something seductive in it. Isabey would be put to it to say how it was done. He had followed the advice of the breeze!

In two months he painted two canvases; what is better, in these eight weeks he became a painter. His father had made no bad guess in predicting this result, but meanwhile, what would his father think of the two pictures he had perpetrated?

The father was invited to criticise the marines. Eugène listened for his opinion, not without misgivings. The old painter gazed awhile in silence; but his approbation was really visible in his countenance. Two or

three of his friends were in the room, and he called them up. The unprecedented pair of landscapes lighted up the studio! Decided surprise was the effect, with due compliments. It was a cordial translation of Virgil's "*Tu Marcellus eris!*" "So much the better if it pleases you", said the young man, "but before long you will see something very different". The father was bursting with pride, and that very day found a couple of dealers, who went so far as to dispute with each other for the possession of the pictures, and gave him a fair price for them.

Eugène Isabey did not rest on his oars. He went on drawing and painting, greatly excited and planning a master stroke.

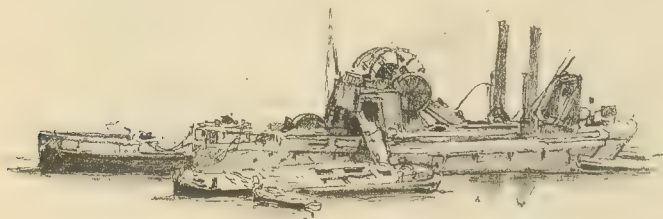
He had recently made an excursion to Dieppe, and had seen the duchesse de Berry, during a sudden squall, organizing a life-saving expedition. He was stirred by the spectacle, and fixed it in mind by a spirited and rapid sketch, in which a whole population was seen moving through the tempest and the billows. When his father was consulted, he pointed out the imprudence of so great an attempt. "The strongest painter would risk a failure in such a critical undertaking" said he "You are talented, but what experience have you acquired? Think of the complications of such a scene as you propose to paint, the multitude of figures, and their different actions. Take my word, and do not lose your labor in trying impossibilities." But if anybody is ready to laugh at impossibilities, it is Eugène. He feels the need of carrying out his sketch, and he is bound to do it. Having hired a studio in the rue Saint-Georges (the same which became later the establishment of a famous instrument-maker, Adolphe Sax), he installed himself telling nobody of his plan, and attacked the critical task. The canvas was soon covered; at each stroke of the brush it seemed as if life flowed in upon it, and the scheme began to grow clear. But soon plenty of difficulties discovered themselves. The compo-



sition was so complex and full that the painter lost his way. He rubbed out on the morrow what he had painted the day before, he made and unmade and re-made. What looked perfect by itself became a failure in the mass. This want of luck only spurred him on, he redoubled his pains, and

still success eluded him. The hour for the opening of the Salon approached, and the picture was unfinished what was to be done? The artist worked more feverishly; he placed himself at the easel at

daylight, and only left it regretfully at dusk. He could not sleep, and his uneasiness mastered him completely. At the climax of his despair, a caprice came into his head. He sent out for a bottle of champagne, and emptied it conscientiously, while going on with his work. His instinctive



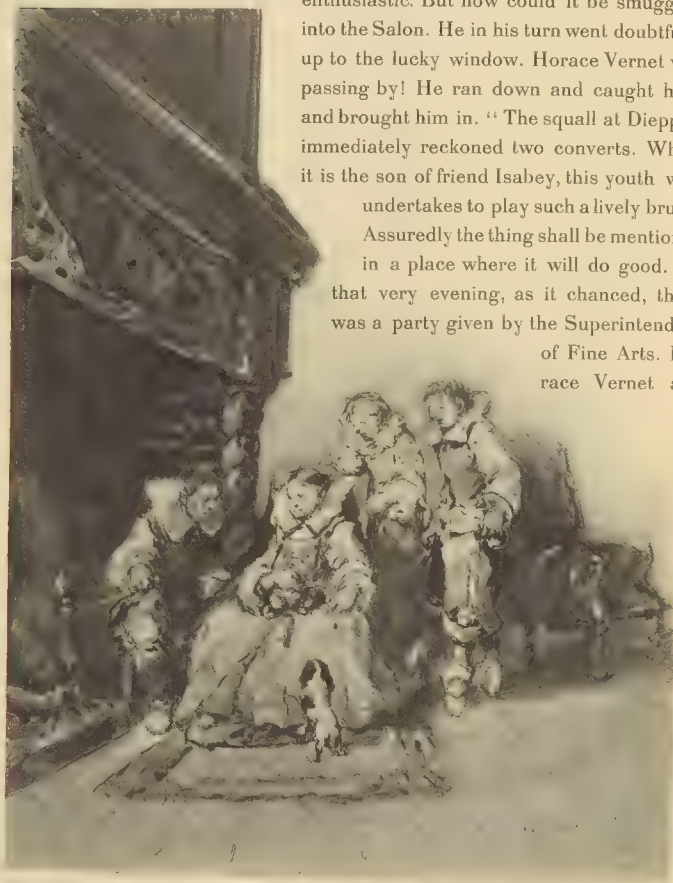
notion was right; the wrinkles smooth themselves out of his mind, and his stimulated energies froth up gallantly. Thus this french genius was dipped and baptised in sound french wine; a jolly baptism.

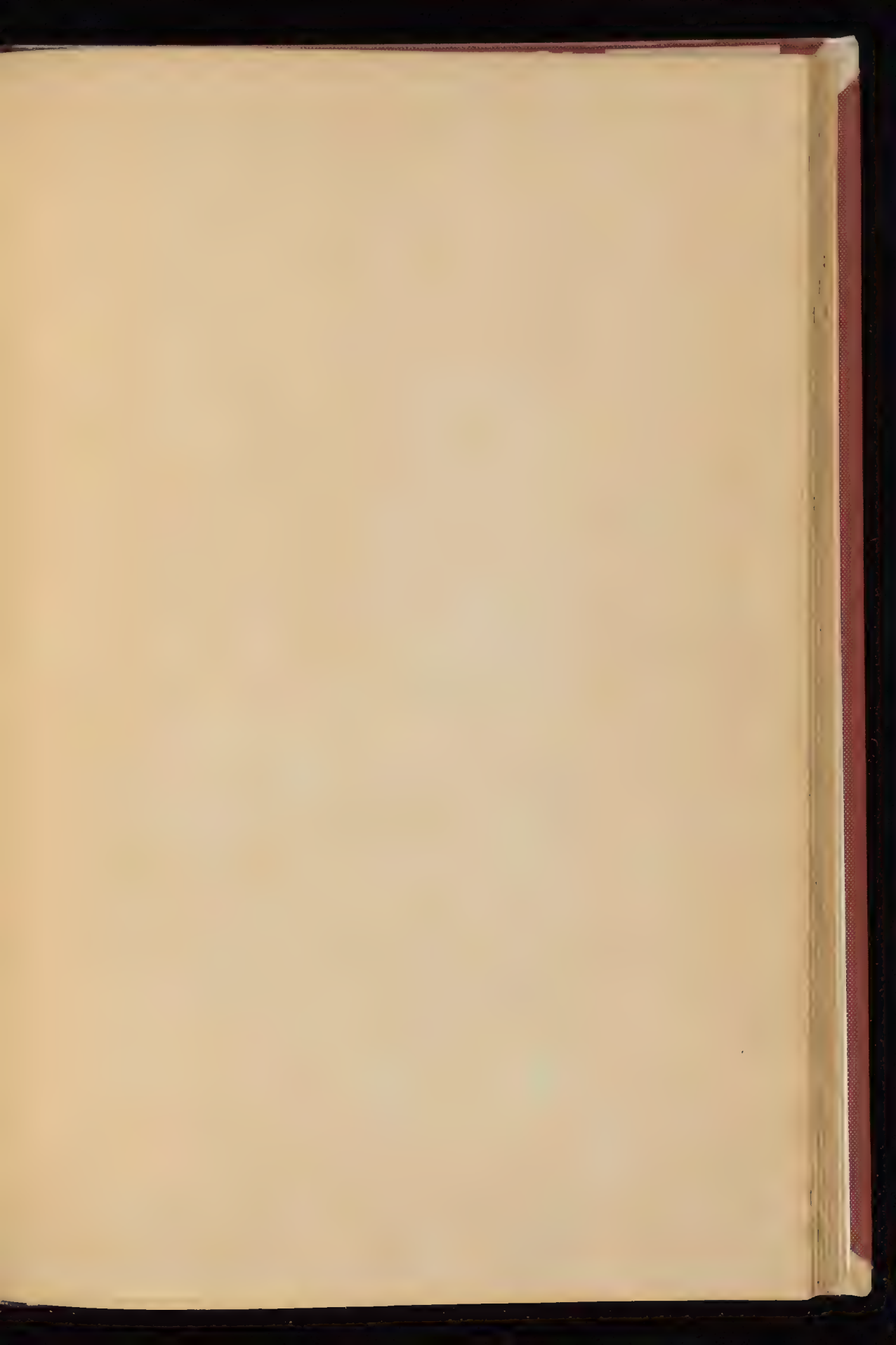
The picture was completed in the warm mood of gaiety that comes with the aroma of champagne. But when the final touch was given, the

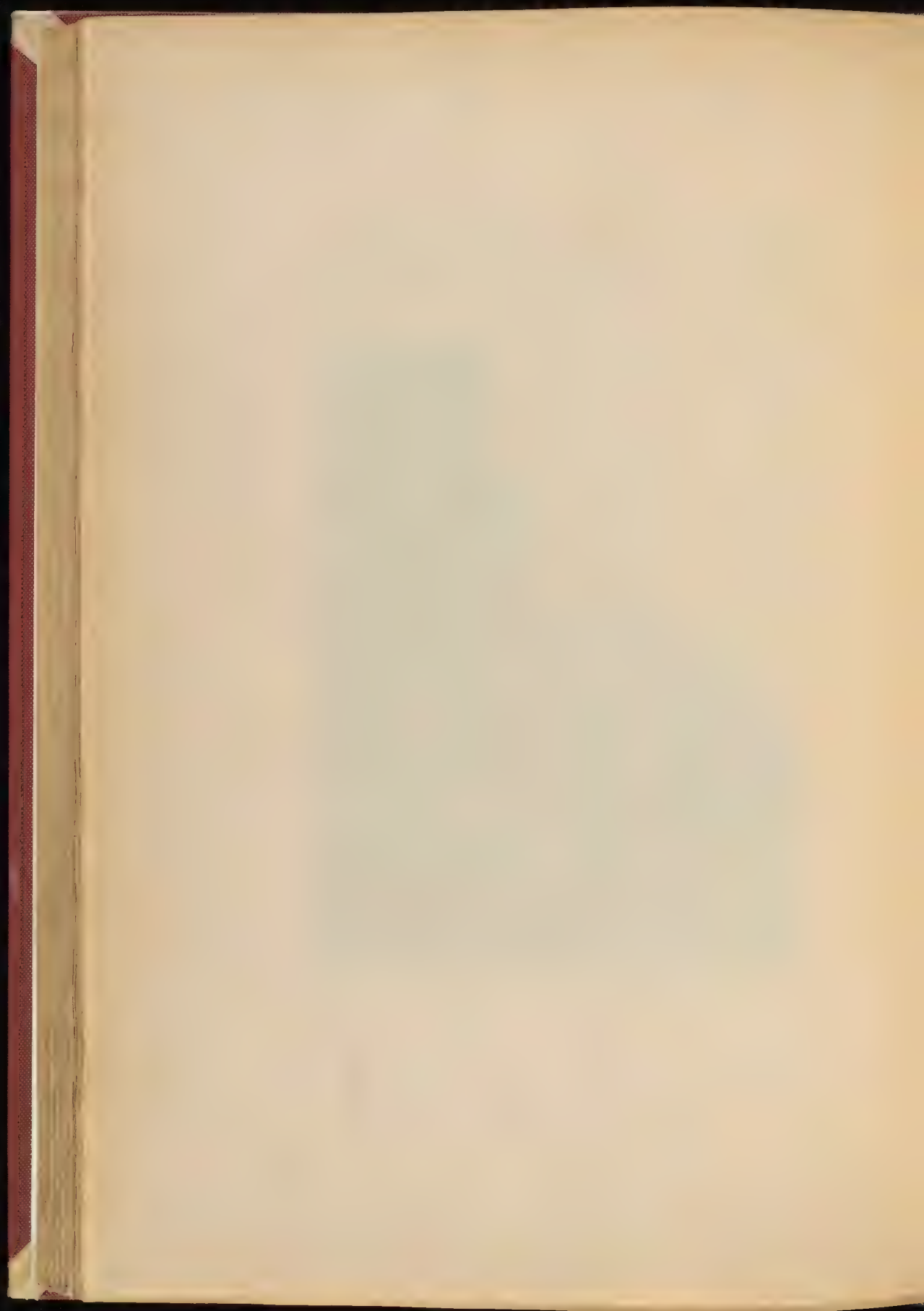
artist was seized with a different apprehension. The last grace was expired for the reception of pictures for the exhibition. Isabey went gloomily to the window; it was his way of invoking hazard. As it happened, the baron d'Ivry was passing in the street. Thank heaven! At a signal, he came into the studio, bringing good fortune with him. He saw the work, and waxed

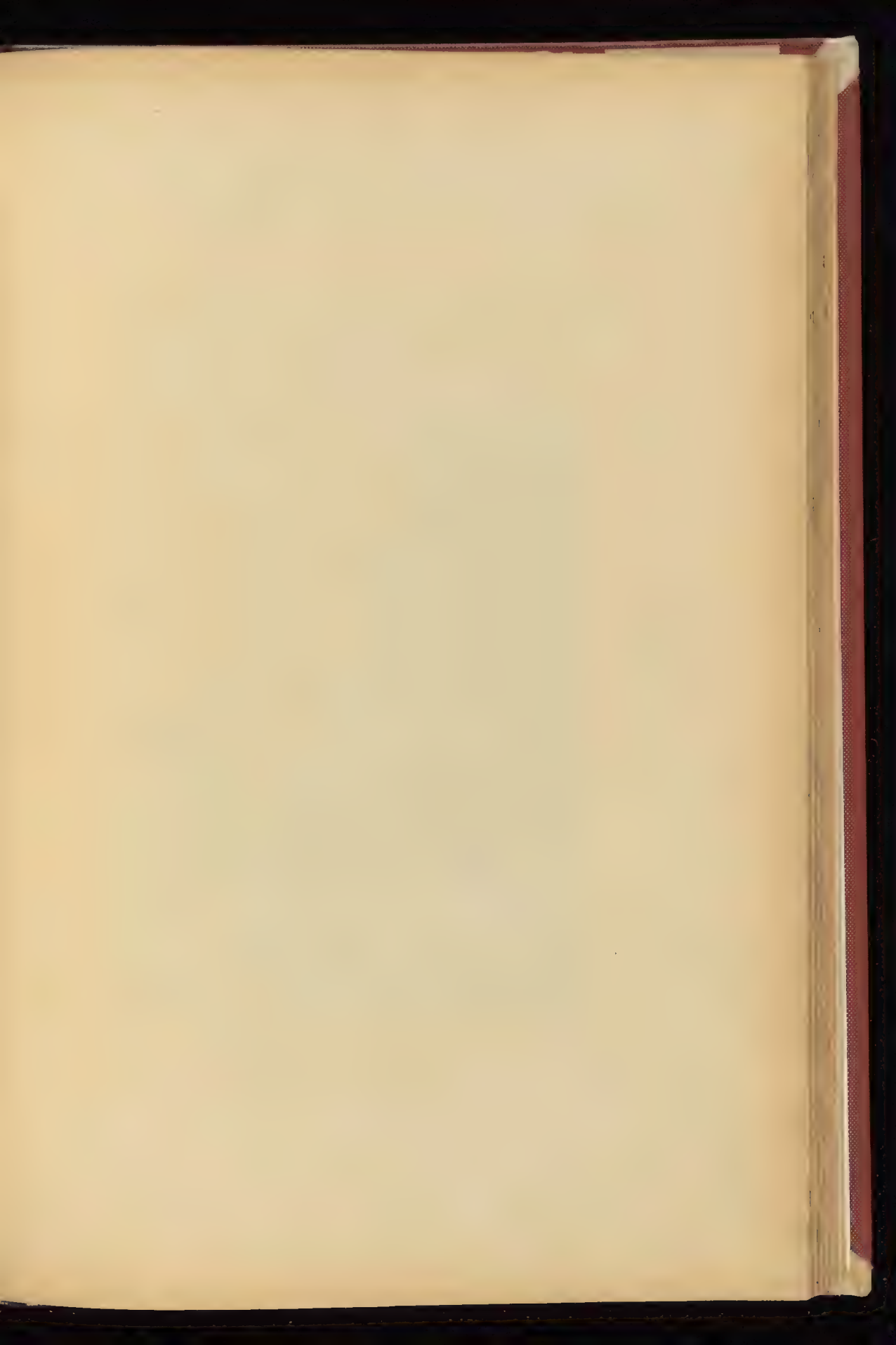
enthusiastic. But how could it be smuggled into the Salon. He in his turn went doubtfully up to the lucky window. Horace Vernet was passing by! He ran down and caught him, and brought him in. "The squall at Dieppe" immediately reckoned two converts. What, it is the son of friend Isabey, this youth who undertakes to play such a lively brush!

Assuredly the thing shall be mentioned in a place where it will do good. On that very evening, as it chanced, there was a party given by the Superintendent of Fine Arts. Horace Vernet and

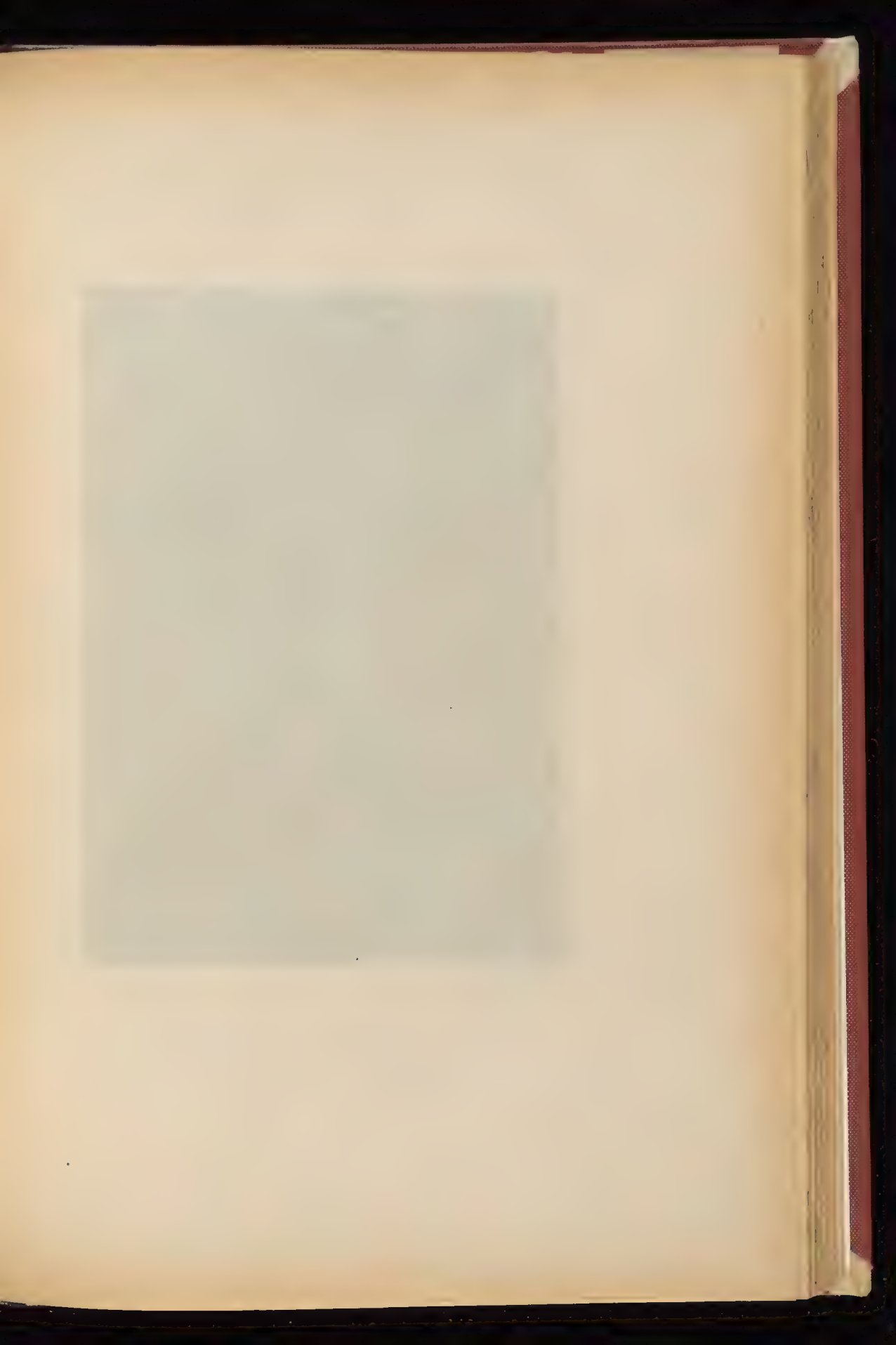


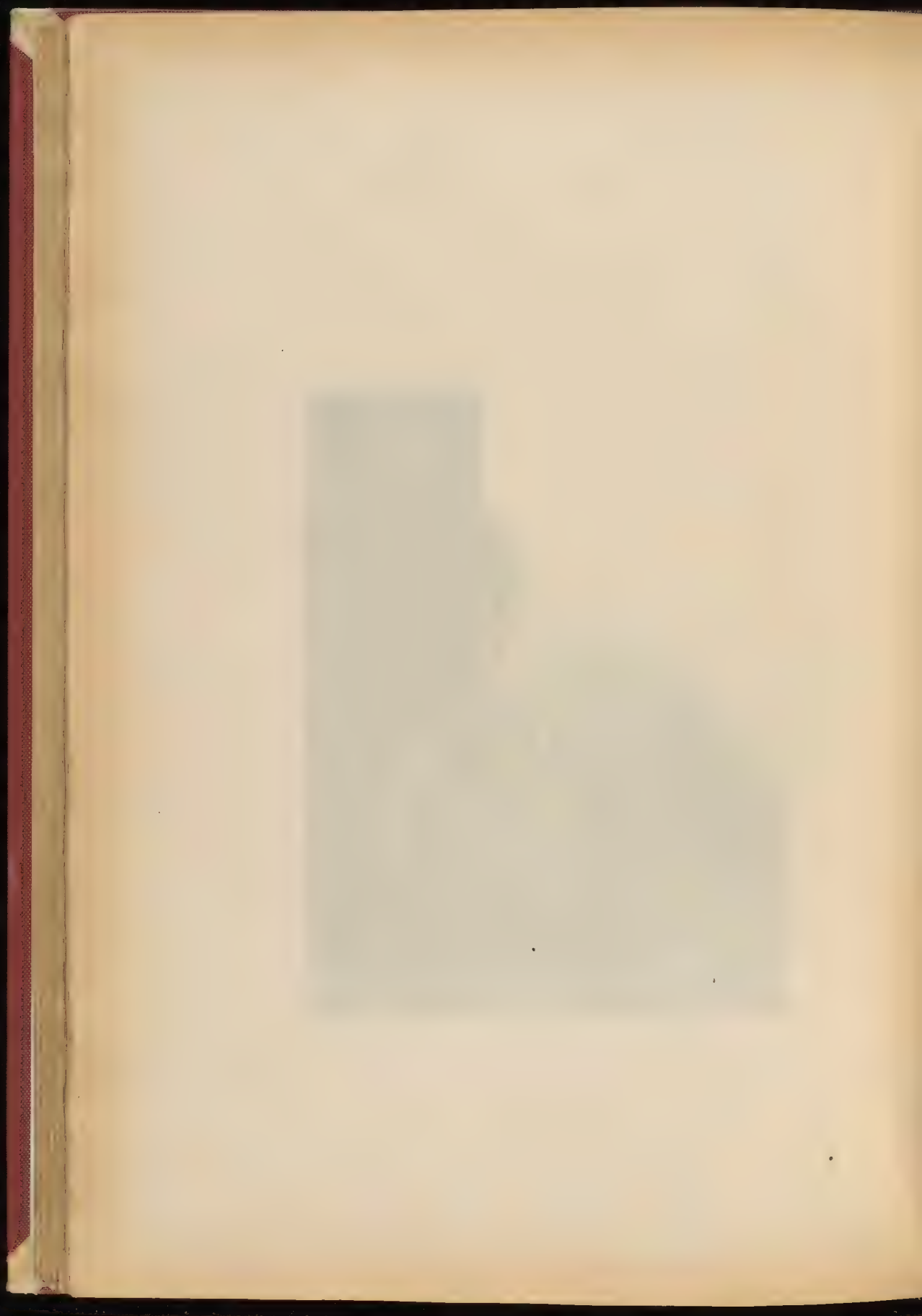




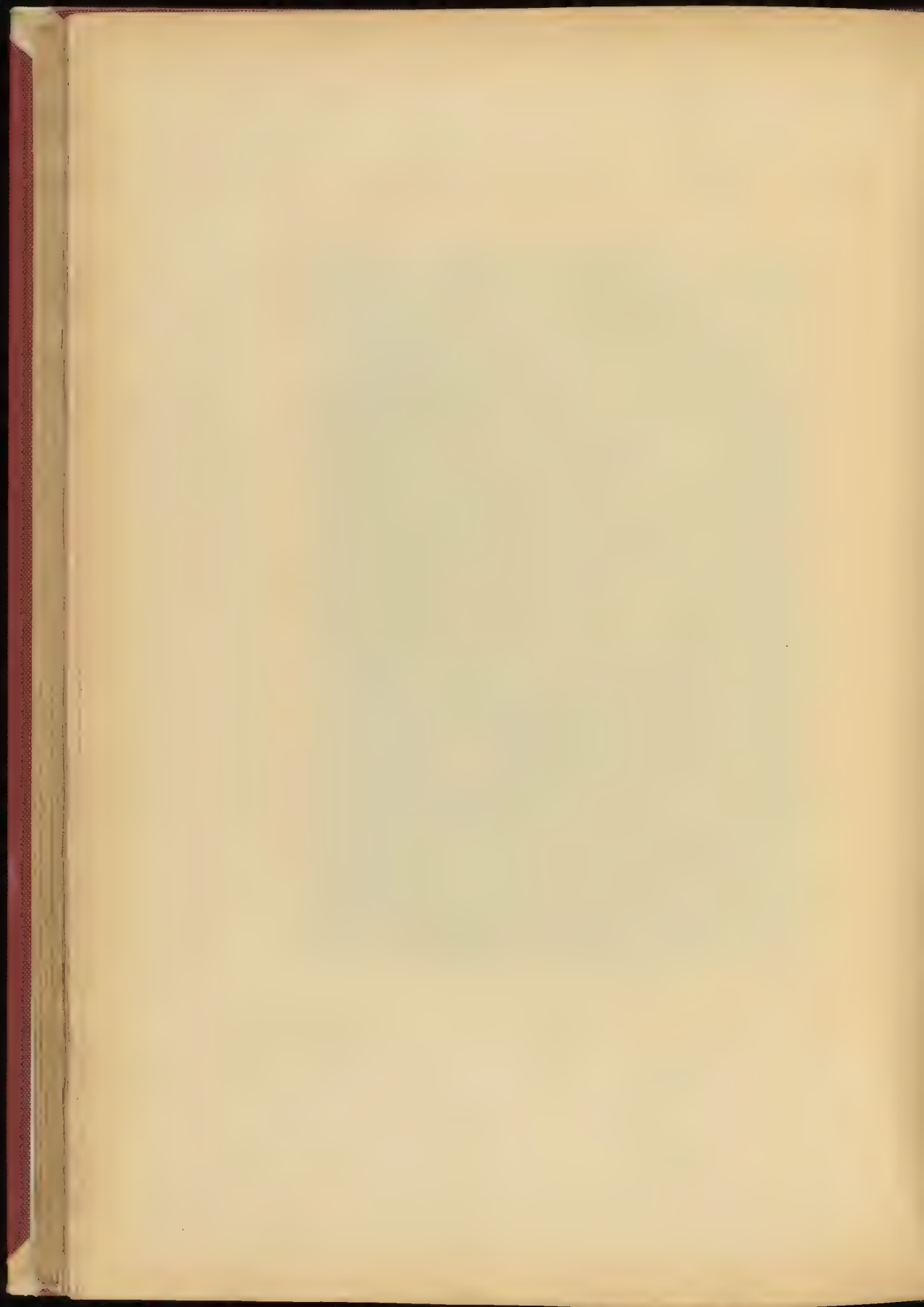


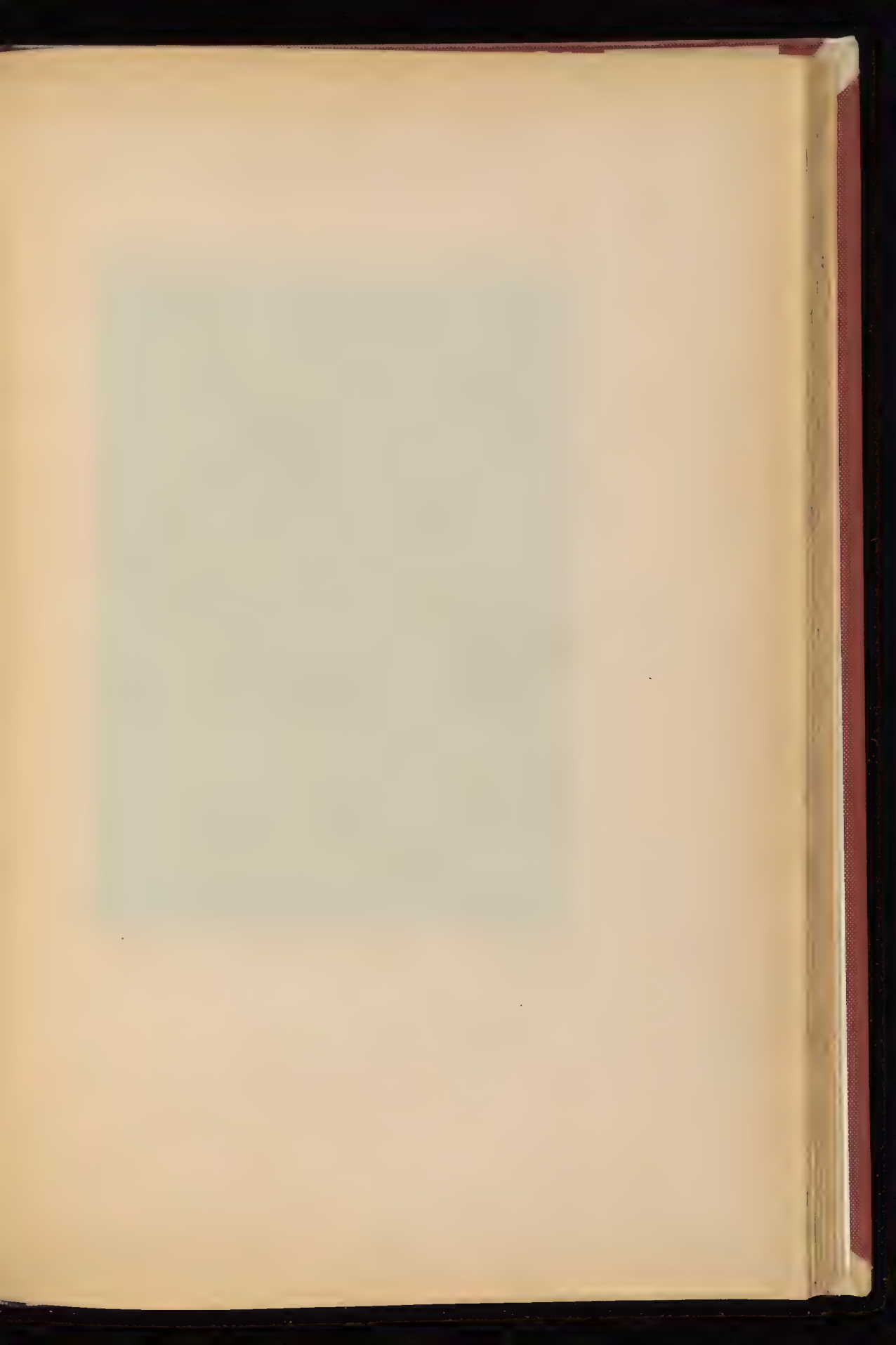






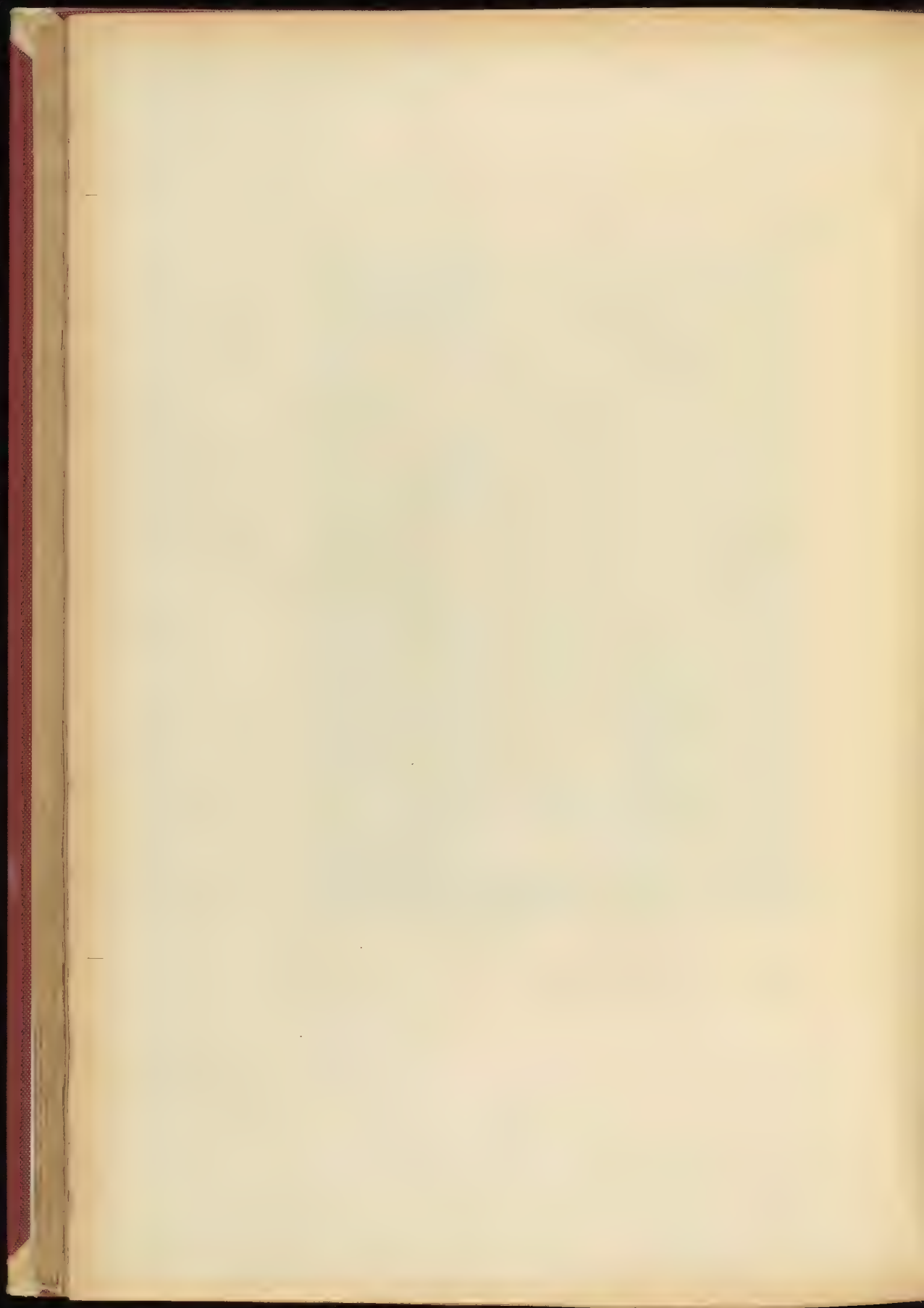










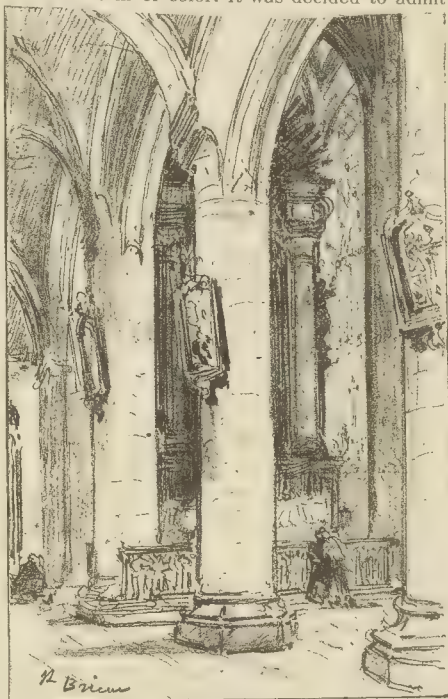


the baron d'Ivry trumpeted their discovery. Let the picture be brought. The reception was still going on when, word having been sent to the artist to entrust his work to two servants of the Superintendent, the picture, before an hour had passed, was carried in. Nobody could resist such a fury of the brush, such a storm of color. It was decided to admit the canvas to the Salon, on a panel of honor, before the opening of the doors; and this was done, in the dawn of the morning.

No one told the author or his father. The two went to the Louvre, where the exhibitions were then held, in the course of the afternoon, as disinterested visitors. At the end of the first room a crowd was gathered, what was the masterpiece that set the throng agog? You have guessed; it was "The Squall at Dieppe".

The father had lacked confidence in his son, and the son had kept his wager and gained his venture. Just as he had astonished the family friends, and even the great Géricault himself, in coming back from Havre with his marines, so now he gained the favor of the critics at a stroke. A first class medal was accorded him; the duchesse de Berry purchased the canvas. Renown took care of him henceforth. Assuredly there is a lucky star for this family of Isabey.

Isabey the elder was like a jewel-cutter; Isabey the younger is like



a jewel-setter. The former was a minute portraitist, preparing documents for history with touches like those of the graver. The latter is a sleight of hand performer, playing with lighted fuses. It may be confessed that Bonington is to be thanked for initiating his career, but he certainly went no further. Eugène Isabey is quite spontaneous. The innumerable and various pictures produced by him are nobody's but his own. Peaceful marine subjects, historical marine subjects, the laboratories of alchemists, the smithy of armor-makers, processions and ceremonies, warlike engagements, hunting scenes, he scatters them all before us. And



Théophile Gautier, whose conclusions are not to be taken without caution, was at least right when he wrote of him these sentences: "Mr Isabey is original. He creates every part of the microcosm in which his talent exercises itself. His special mark is his liveliness;

not that he has ever indulged himself with painted puns, or gone after farfetched and literary topics. So far from that, he is pleased with the first subject that comes to hand. But, when he paints it, a druggist's retort, or a bit of stone, or a boat, looks ingenious. His way of laying on the color shows a dazzling energy, a gallantry that takes away the breath, an odd originality that seizes you.



His canvas burns; his quick-nerved and rapid touches have the sureness of flourishes executed with the free hand; he gives each object its proper relief by touching it

with a sparkle." What has just been read will apply as well to the waters-colors as to the oil-pictures of the master. Long before aquarelles became a fashion they were produced by Eugène Isabey. I am unable to draw a line between the water-color artist and the painter, for in him they are but one.

In these aquarelles, loaded with body-color, hastily dashed out, full of vehemence and palpitating harmonies, he treats his favorite subjects as if in oil. Without dallying with idle subtleties, I will take, then, his productions in the mass, and will try to give an idea of his style of art.

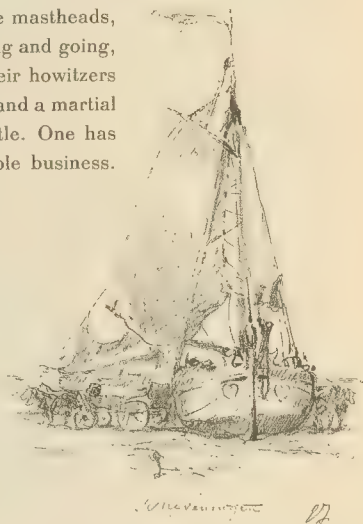
His art is one of full liberty and unpremeditated caprice. The labor and preparation are hidden under an improvised air. One would say he had thrown his palette to the sky, and that the colors fell from it in fountain-spray. What he produces is not reality, it is his own comment on the pleasure caused by living nature.

Anything is good. He wrestles neither with Jacob nor with the angel; he is as far from the realist as from the idealist. He simply lets himself follow the will of the hour or the minute. But, to be clearer, I will make two parcels of his work, and will set his marine views on the left hand, and, on the right hand his fascinating works of imagination. As a marine painter, Isabey was among the first to feel the attraction of little nooks, of the chances of discovery. A bit of beach beaten or smoothed by the waves, a cliff breaking short upon the surf, a village anchored at the



edge of the coast, a bark drawn up on the sand, were enough to hold him fast. Joseph Vernet, in his views of the Ports of France, and even in his studies, subordinated all to the conventional arrangement. Isabey thinks of the expression and temper of the scene rather than of its literary capability. When he does inspire himself with some historical fact, he gives it a life of his own, but with a very different intensity from that of the heavy and academic Gudin. I saw, some years ago, his "Combat of the Texel"; and I have still in my eye those big dutch ships, gross and black, grappling the lively frigates of Jean Bart's fleet, the streamers floating from the mastheads, the tense rigging, the sailors coming and going, bestirring themselves to fire off their howitzers and muskets. A wonderful vivacity and a martial good nature preside over the battle. One has got to conquer: that is the whole business. Painting cannot be more national.

Again, the painter will evoke "The Embarcation of de Ruyter", and this sally of the hero's will show all the magnificence of an apotheosis. We shall have from him, again, "The Attack on a battery in 1600", the "Funeral of an Officer of the Squadron under Louis XVI", the tragical "Wreck of the three-mast *Emily*", the "Burning of the steamer *Austria*", the "Royal Fishing-Party", and I know not how many other marine subjects of all sorts, which are scattered among collections and Museums. All the same, I cannot disguise my predilection for the character subjects and scenes of interior. It is in these that I find Eugène Isabey a real creator. His personages dash out of his hot imagination, all jostling, unforeseen, and dazzling. They swarm and glitter, they live with a sort of life which is all their own; they are born to do just what they are doing, to be as they are, to dress in brocades and laces and satin, gold, silver and steel, to visit an alchemist or a necromancer, to guzzle in



picaresque taverns, to fight duels with lanterns, under the white moonbeams, to cut throats with glittering weapons in churches, or to be gay in gaudy palaces. Assuredly they do not pertain to our humanity; they are of a special and a specially exalted humanity. Are they of any determinable period? At first view one would think so; then it would be seen that Isabey has invented costumes as he invented human beings. Their fashions are an amalgam of ruffs, doublets, hoops, jerkins, bucket-boots, and bits adjusted from the epochs of Charles IX, François I^{er}, Henri IV, Louis XIII, Louis XIV and even Louis XV; but all is so gallant and so dressy, so wittily combined and so quaintly elegant, that we do not



dream of arguing the point. Eugène Isabey is no archæologist; he is an inventor. His fancy is hospitable to any romantic orgie, but it never weeps, it is not *macabre*, it knows no dance of death. It is french and well-wishing in its violence, like the tragedy-ballets which people loved formerly, and for

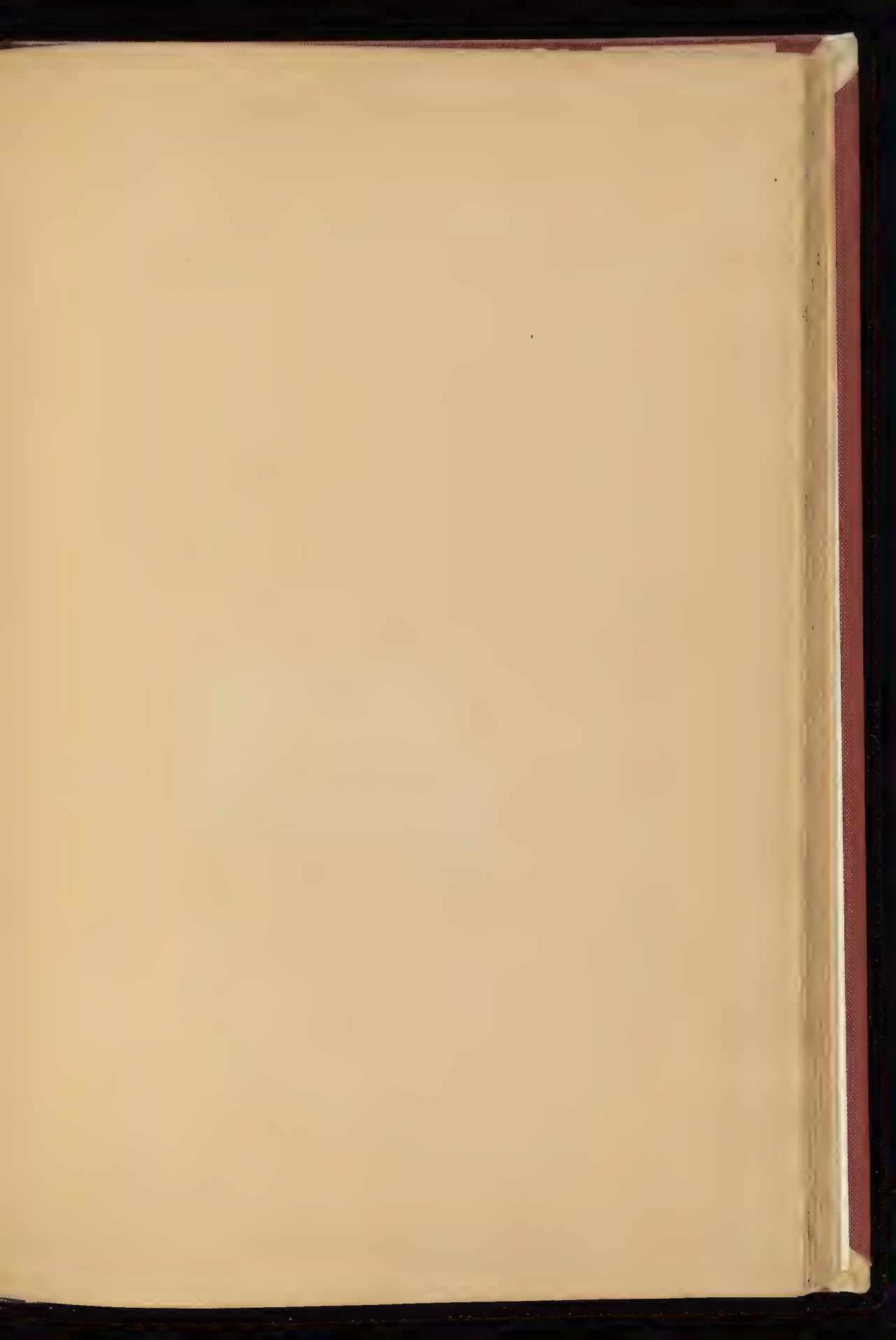
which we have unluckily lost the taste. There is a veritable masterpiece called "A Ceremony in the Church at Delft", a sixteenth century scene. A white gothic church, carved and fretted, paved with tombstones, furnished with brown woodwork, decked with tapestries and banners hung from the arches, serves as the theatre of the pompous ceremony. In the middle rises an enormous pillar, around which rolls a spiral stair, with balustrade in festoons and openwork, crowded with spectators. I fancy the ceremony is only a congress of beauty. It is nothing but splendid lords, grand ladies in fairy-like trappings, pages, grooms and damozels. The eye is fascinated. It intoxicates itself with the stimulus of this free sort of art, where everything tells so lightly, and nothing speaks of effort. And this is, above all, the character of Isabey's painting.

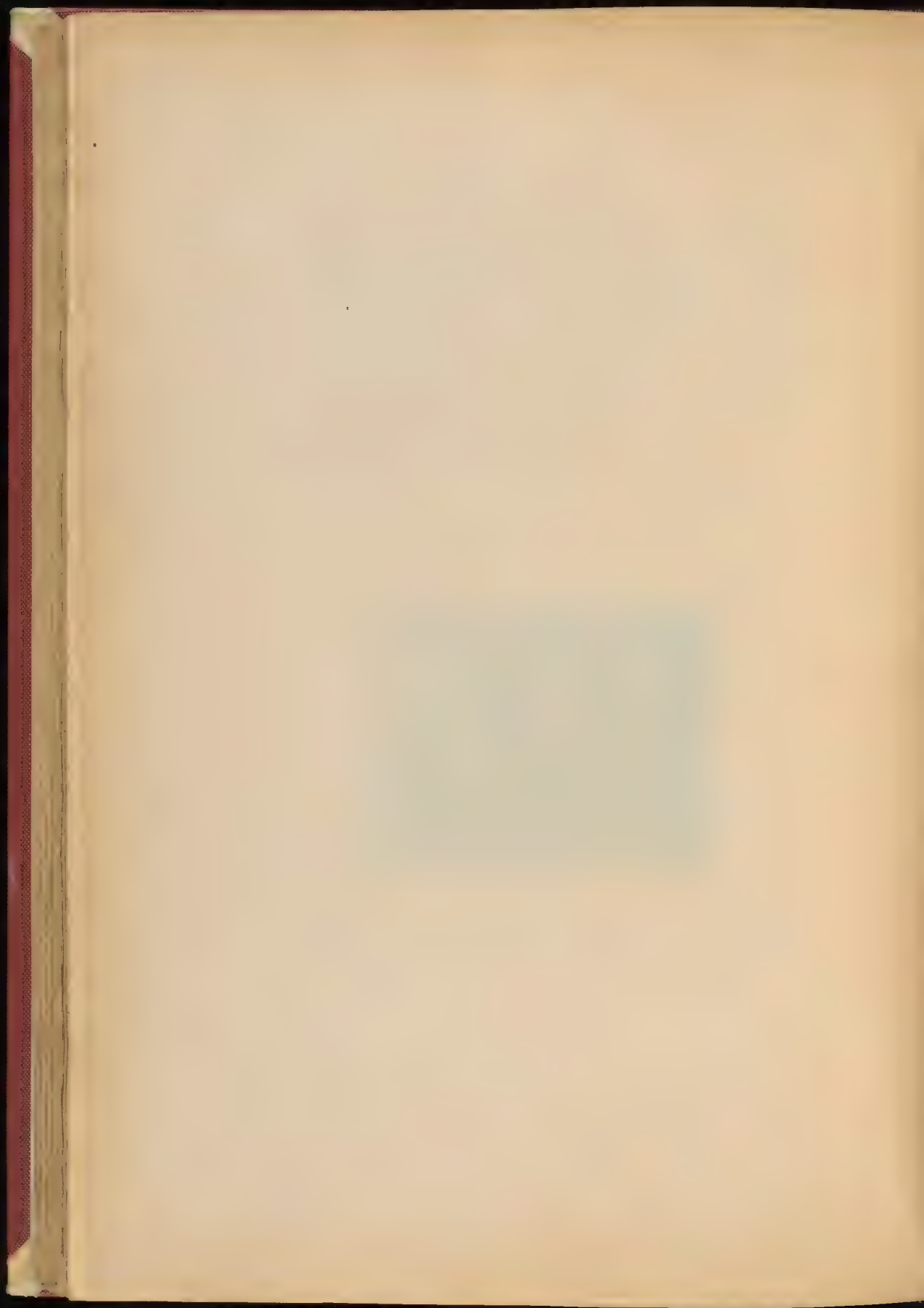
Eugène Isabey belongs, by his turn of fancy, to the romantic school of 1830, but he is not, fundamentally, of any school, and does not proceed from any master. His art, though unbridled, follows a line of logic. The real is never joined to the chimæra; for everything is chimerical,

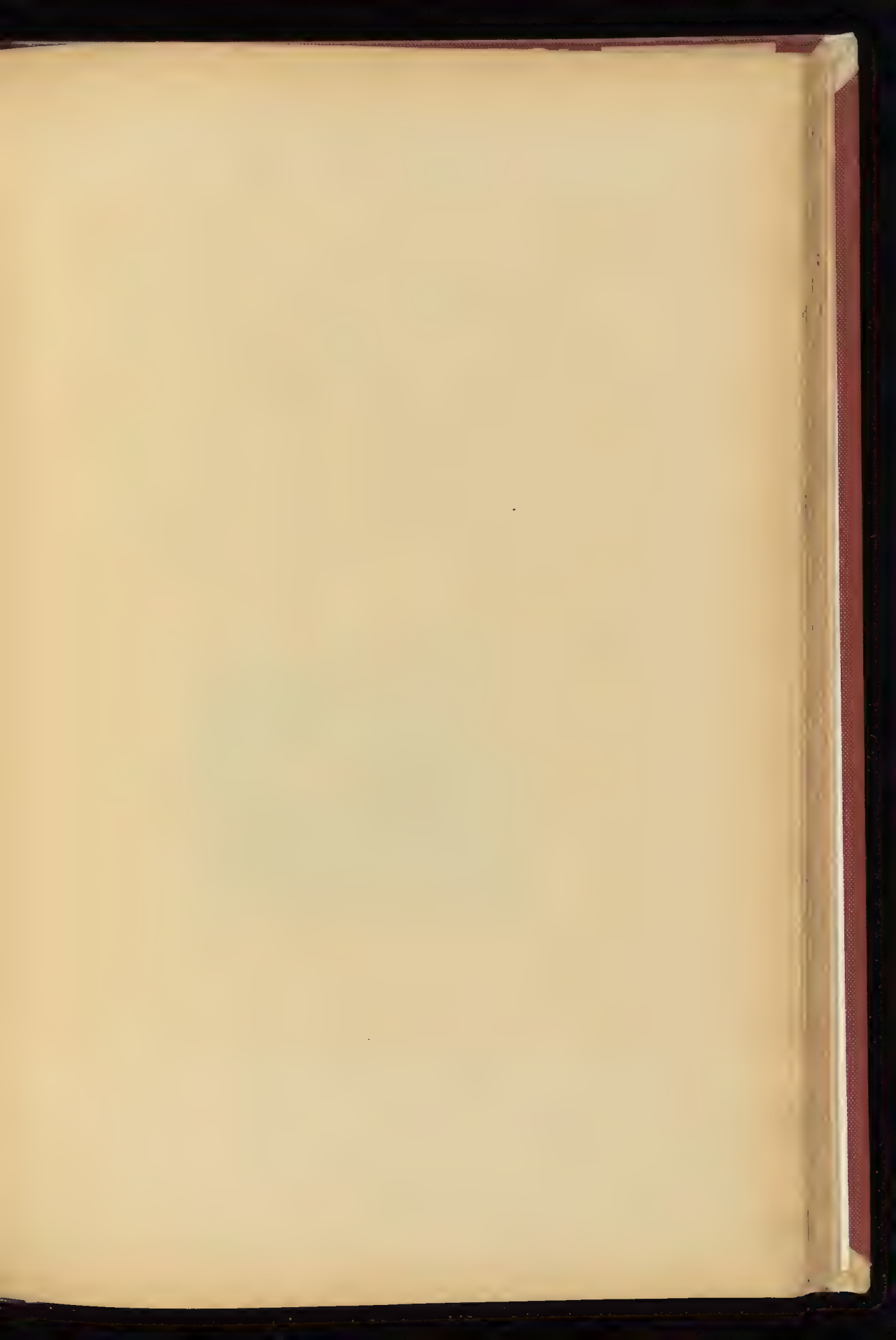
and this consistency of impossibility proclaims license to the eye to enjoy itself. Among all the fantasticals, he is the most emancipated, the most untrammelled, the most independent of realities, the most exempt from philosophising. Other men persevering and narrow, take the bull of reality by the horns, while he is energetically blowing soap-bubbles into the air. With the first, we have to think; with him we amuse ourselves as freely as possible and we are delightfully rested. We love him, because he answers to one side of our french character, to one line of our ideas. He pours to the brim the champagne of art. He embroiders with bewitched variations the scherzo of our symphony. We salute him with all the honors. This finished Parisian is better than a rare colorist; he is one of the perfected types of a french artist.

FOURCAUD.





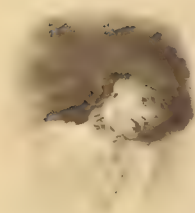


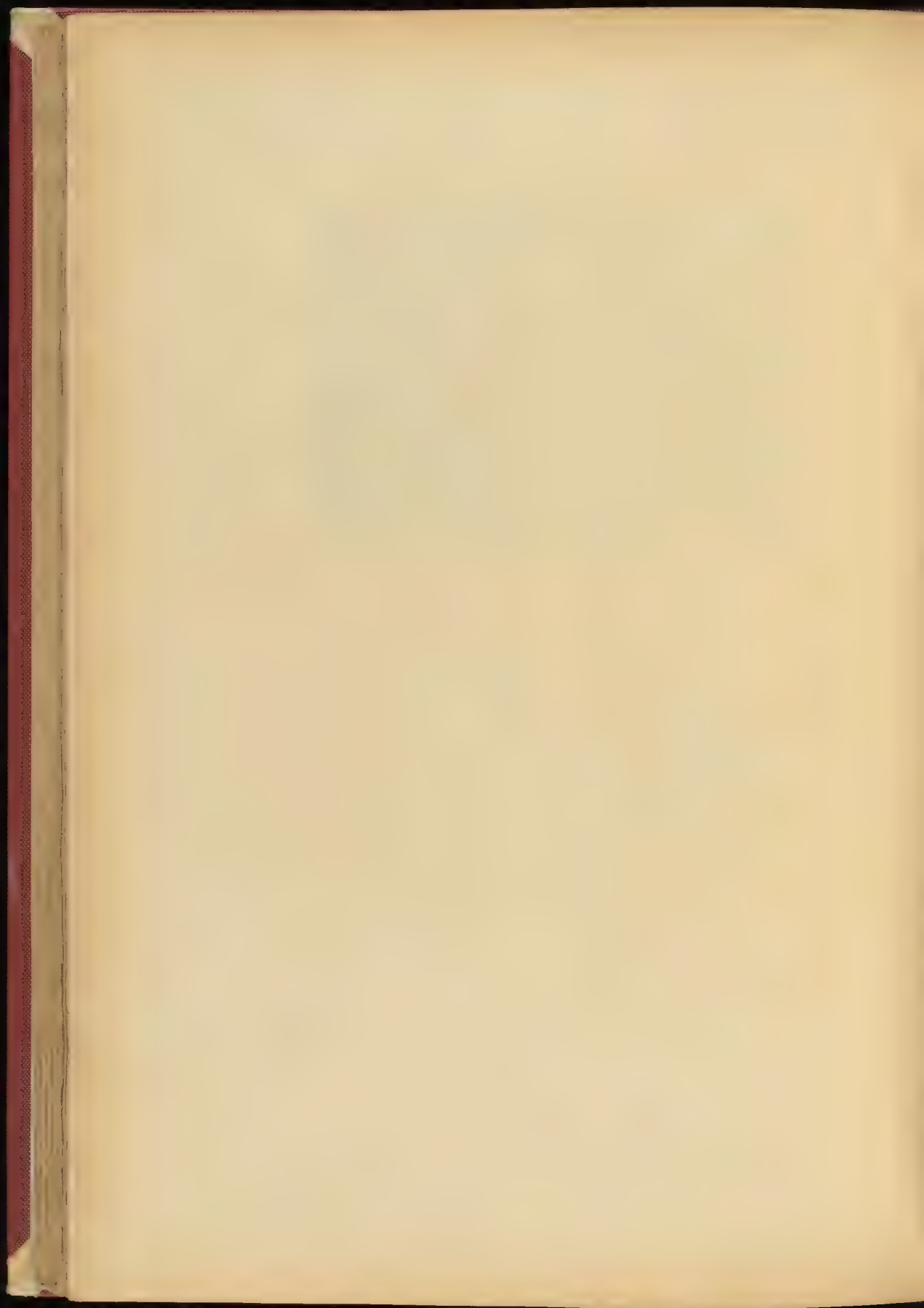




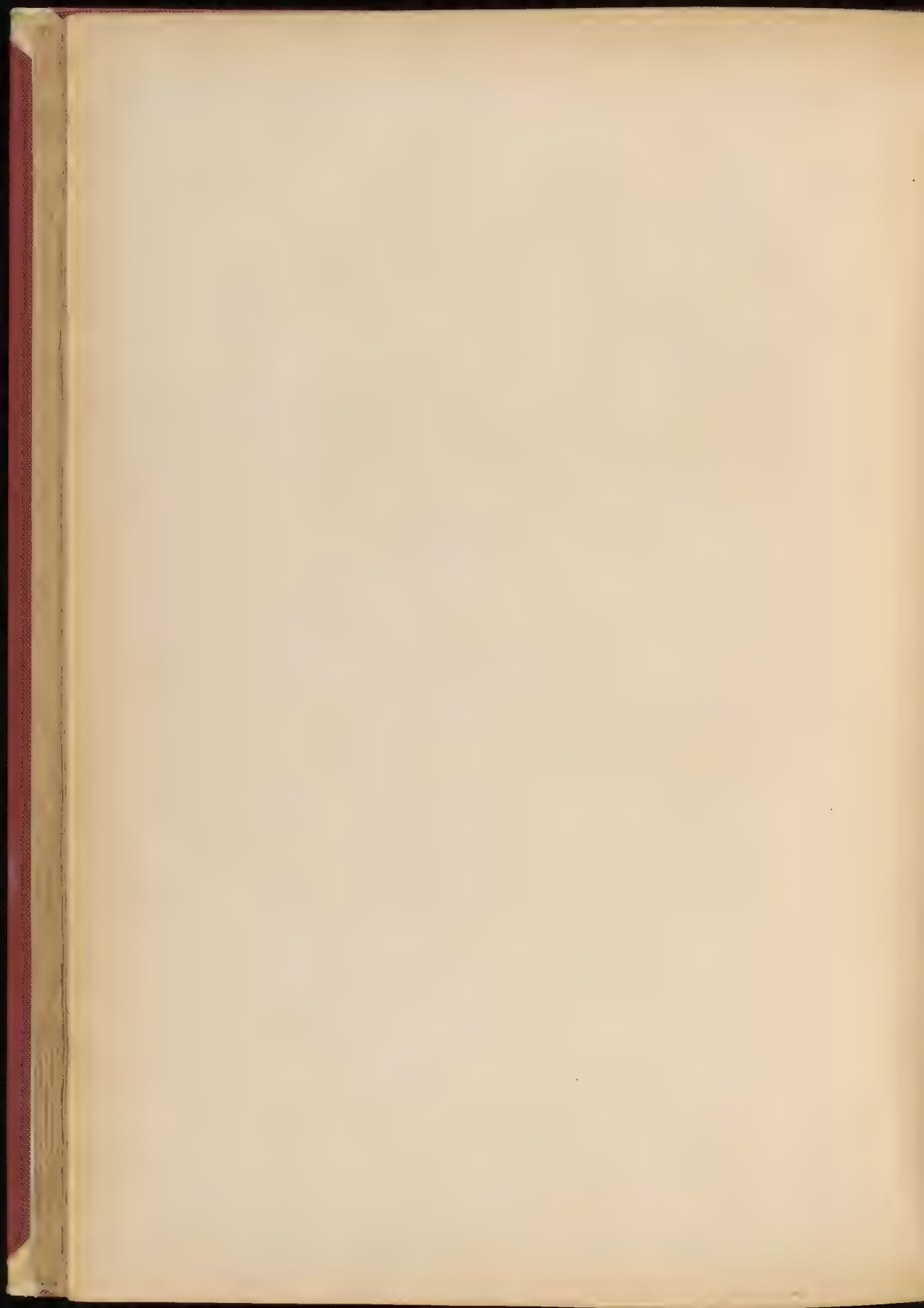






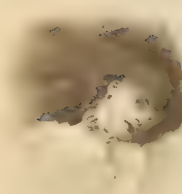








GUSTAVE JACQUET



I have no intention of writing in this place a long essay on water-color painting, knowing that my readers, fair and unfair, will be infinitely more obliged to me for giving them some news about Jacquet than for sparing them my views on the art of painting in washes, even were those views beyond discussion.

Jacquet is so firm in the good opinion of the public that no original lecture about him is permissible. I can only, as it were, declaim him to my audience, permitting myself now and then a few asides. Still I mean to preserve my rights.

I would describe Aquarelle as a bewitching young person, light and idle in appearance, full of grace, full of coquetry, rather fantastic, and

sometimes a little deceptive. Under her light-colored hair which the caprice of the wind carries with it, there are tender and sly meanings, fleeting thoughts, intentions of fairy-like boldness, or heart-memories born on the instant.

She cannot bear to be roughly touched, she eludes the commonplaces and heavy compliments of the vulgar. A crisp sonnet will suit her, a madrigal may bring out her kind qualities. But to wear her good graces shows that you have no end of tact, wit, and à-propos.

She is by no means indistinct in her outlines, nor, on the other hand, is she weighed down with her adornments. A single "coat" is enough for her, and she cannot bear two thicknesses in the same place. She is like a fine nerved Froufrou, delighted with whatever is unexpected and unheard-of; but a Froufrou who, when she once gets to Venice, stays there!



Aquarelle at one time became indignant, and eloped among the English next door.

It has been the luck of water-color, as with several French inventions

and quantities of good things in general, not to be appreciated at home until after a success abroad. We had her, and had her so surely that we



never open our eyes to her real beauty till rivalry pointed out our neighbors on their knees at her feet.

And England made much of her. Here she was treated as a grand dignitary, and cherished with all sorts of little flatteries and jealousies. Nothing was neglected to trick her out, she was covered with lace-like workmanship, and finally a splendid hall was built for her, a palace to which the throng of her admirers resorted.

It was then we understood how unjust we had been towards her, and, better late than never, we made haste to call back the refugee. Less straight-laced than the English, we have taken the line of treating her as a light being, as an irresponsible creature perhaps, but with a familiarity that leaves her all her cleverness, her grace, and her capriciousness.

Each of her admirers falls in love with some one quality in her character, according to his own proper leaning and taste. In the company of one she seems satirical; in another's, dreamy and unheeding; others again have obtained from her inspirations of fantasy, caprices undreamed of and unpublished, a kind of eloquence edited in terms brilliant and hopeless of interpretation, after the manner of the antique oracles.



Here are three moods, and Jacquet has tried them all. He has been one of the Diva's most fervent adorers. Is it for this reason that he scarcely goes to her but for inspirations for his oil-color work?

He is to blame. If Aquarelle were to receive no more practical homages, she would soon get sulky, and her rare apparitions would grow mystical and unattractive. She would complain of being a second time neglected, and would leave



us perhaps without return. The schoolgirl style she can no longer disport. She has come out in the grand world, and has come out with conquest. But beware of making her a studio caprice or an unintelligible and Sibylline mystery, two extremes to which her pliable steps can be led with equal readiness.



In France her gallery, her palace, is yet unbuilt; but she receives in a charming snug boudoir where it is as impossible to speak above a half-tone as in a sanctuary, and where elegant and distinguished women contribute a tone of brightness and delicacy in perfect harmony with the object of the devotion. And it is wonderful that in a land where there is perfect liberty to say anything, where unwelcome truth comes in with a grand trumpeting of rude language, where uncivil criticism easily passes for blunt honesty, or originality, or frankness, Aquarelle, with her visionary delicacy, her half-uttered wit, her diaphanous methods, has been able to please.

Are there many artists whom you could name, better equipped for water-color painting than Jacquet, — better inclined by the nature of their genius to give emphasis to the liveliest

or tenderest hues at one stroke of a downy brush? I can readily fancy all the oil-color canvases of Jacquet to have been made over in water-color painting, and I know nothing which could suit the art better. Take the "Minuet", the "First to Arrive", the "Reverie", the "Pavane", and say whether Aquarelle would not render with exquisite à-propos those floating subjects, that *dolce pensiero*, those vivid hues?

But Jacquet has not put the whole of himself into his works, notwithstanding that he has uttered in them his favorite note. There remains at the bottom of his heart more than one souvenir of the loves of his earlier art, the armor and the plumes, war and its tossing banners, the military dress of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Be it Mars or Venus, all the soul of Jacquet is there, and it is but fair to state that Mars has not the preference. Orlando lingers in the gardens of Armida, and it would not be for our profit or our justice to blame him for it.

To say sooth, Jacquet gives me the idea, in our generation of painters, of one of those boulders they call erratic, which present themselves on mountains without explaining how they came to get there, having nothing in common with the rocks around.

Jacquet is an anomaly, a sort of spectre, in our age where he partakes not the movement and the tendency. At a moment when artists most in renown betake themselves to prose, seeking the beautiful in the truthfulness of the cabbage and the brilliancy of rags and tatters, he is found



wandering afar, searching behind the sunset of the past for dreamed-of beauty and elegance extinct.

It was in rowing against stream that he arrived, as he has done, at that glittering French Renaissance, which was the apogee of our taste in architecture, in furnishing, in clothing

But are we obliged to believe the painters who show us always, in their resurrection of this bygone time, garments of irreproachable freshness, on the grand lord and on the humble *soudard*? Obviously this is a convenient fiction, especially when we think of Henri III complaining to the States General of Blois that he had to wear the same doublet three months together. The threadbare suit has found in all ages some one to carry it as a badge of honor. But this is but a trifling detail for Art, which with Poetry has a right to its licences.



thousand little trifles of that epoch of French story.

One of the most curious of places is the studio of Jacquet. Here we find the whole history and career of the artist reiterated with a spirit which cannot possibly be imitated in writing. Here are his models of

The epoch of Henri II has so entirely set its stamp on Jacquet that he has kept the imprint even in his person, and one is almost astonished not to find him in his studio, dressed in doublets of damask and silk, the ruff around the neck, and the velvet hat set back on the head. When one rummages in this studio one finds the most gorgeous stuffs of that period, the satins embroidered in gold, the *cimarras*, the *lampas* with lines of silver, and all the

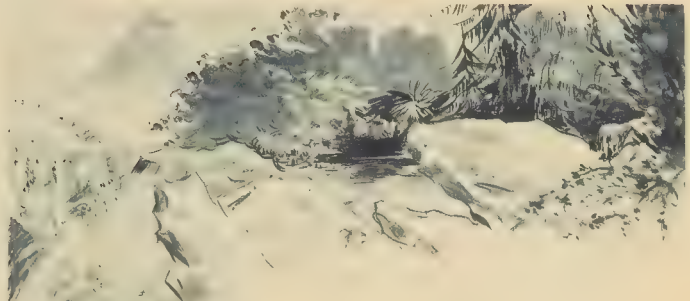
armor, arranged straight and severe in the privacy and dimness lent them by an immense tapestry partly caught up. Quite at the extremity and over the armor, amongst those antique drums and trumpets which announced his entry into Strasbourg, appears Louis XV painted by Vanloo; Louis XV, in all the grace and erectness of his youth, a little effeminate perhaps, but quite royal notwithstanding. In this highly-colored likeness, with tints like pastel deftly stumped together, we find the synthesis of all the portraits executed in the studio. That is to say that after Rubens and Veronese, who had taught him largeness of conception, boldness of color, and flashing play of light, Jacquet arrived by a natural incline at the eighteenth century, at Latour, and Vanloo, and Watteau.



Watteau, that grand, long uncomprehended master of French art, settled definitively the taste and bent of Jacquet, who from thence established himself in the full spirit of the eighteenth century; from this epoch he has not chosen to emerge, happy to thus escape from our gray century, from our gray monotony that weighs us down, from the invention of coal which smokes us and stifles us, from the splash of mire which signifies life in modern Paris.

So we are at Versailles once more; and, if you listen to the announcements of male

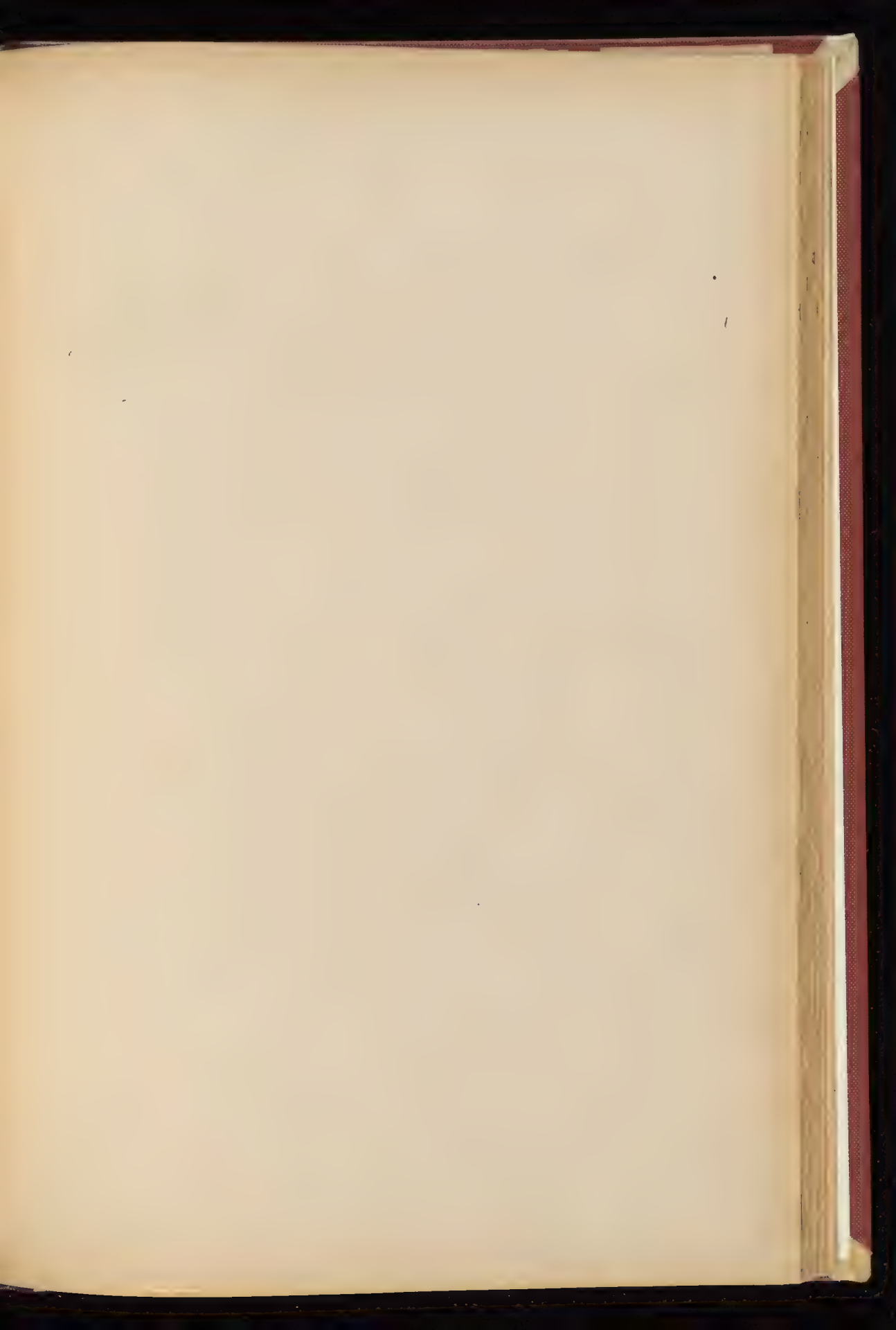
and female visitors, you will hear those of the old court; while, if you spy in a corner of the studio, you will perceive a forgotten sedan chair, left no doubt by some court lady, who seems to have also forgotten on the table her patch-box and her fan.

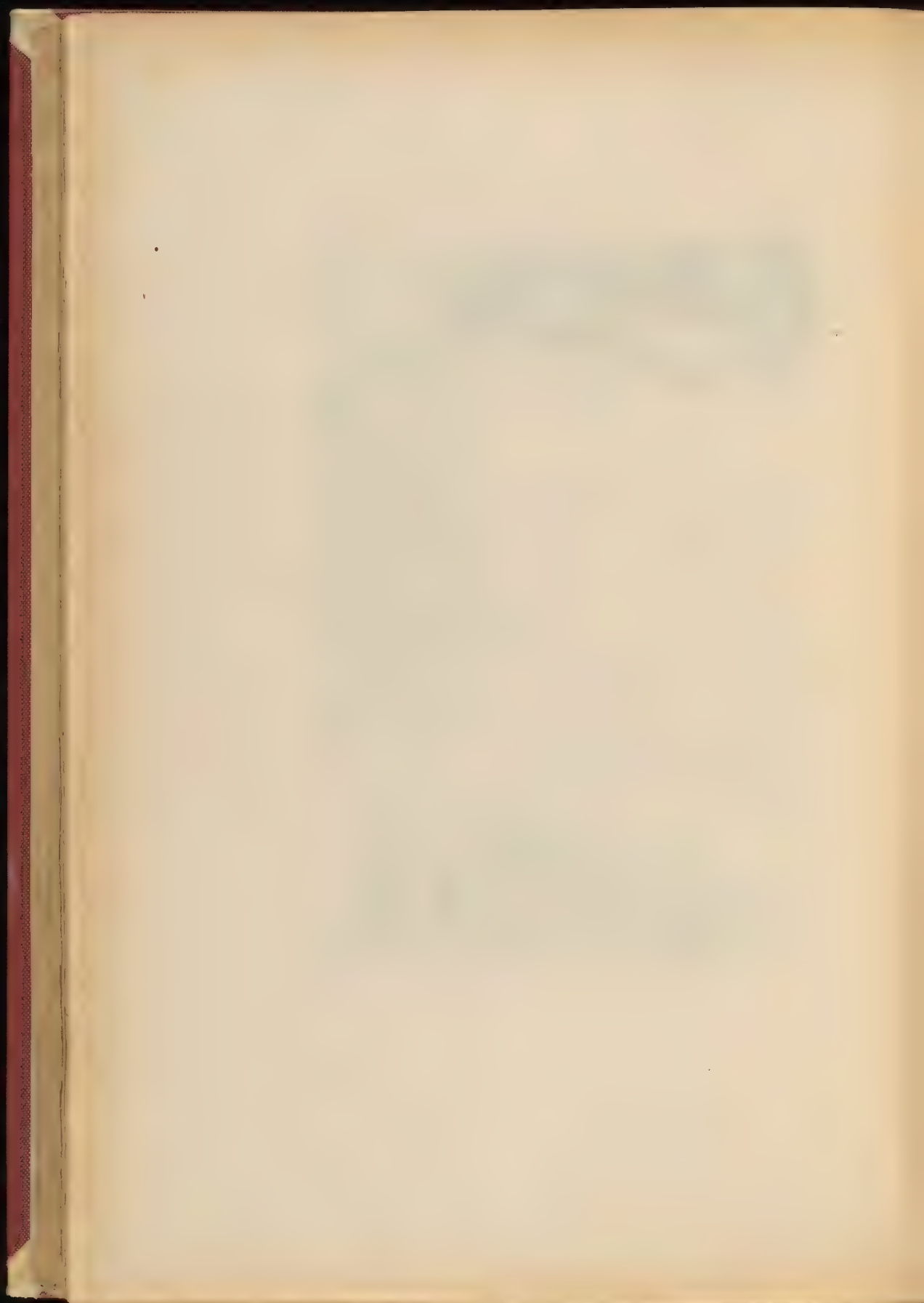


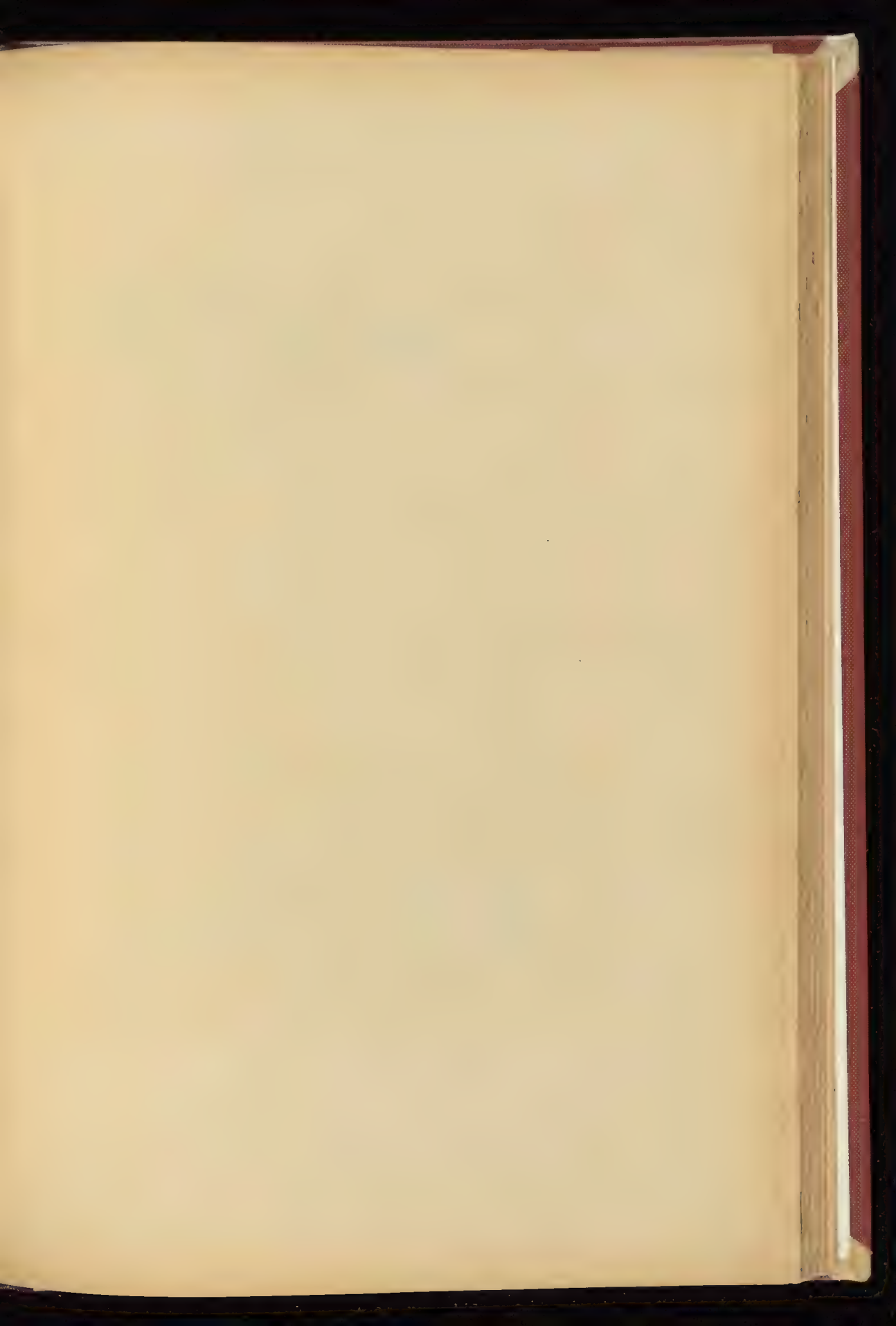
For my part I envy Jacquet in my soul, for being so much his own master as to abstract himself from the present, and live as long as he likes in a charming ideal, in an atmosphere substantial with the realization of his dream.

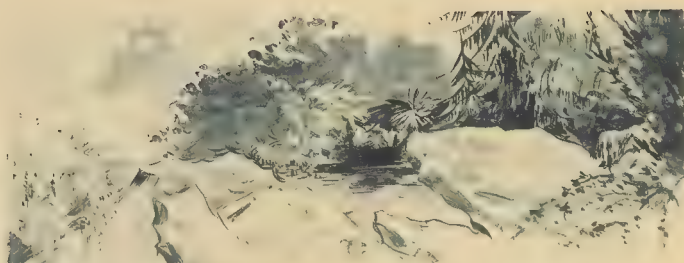
But "all are not permitted to go to Corinth" or, say, Versailles. The road thitherward is not always easy and free from danger. Jacquet has proved this more than another, and has hesitated long before finding his present path. From 1865 to 1869 his life was passed among historical researches, experiments at military exercises and on the field of battle, among warlike music, among superb studies of color;







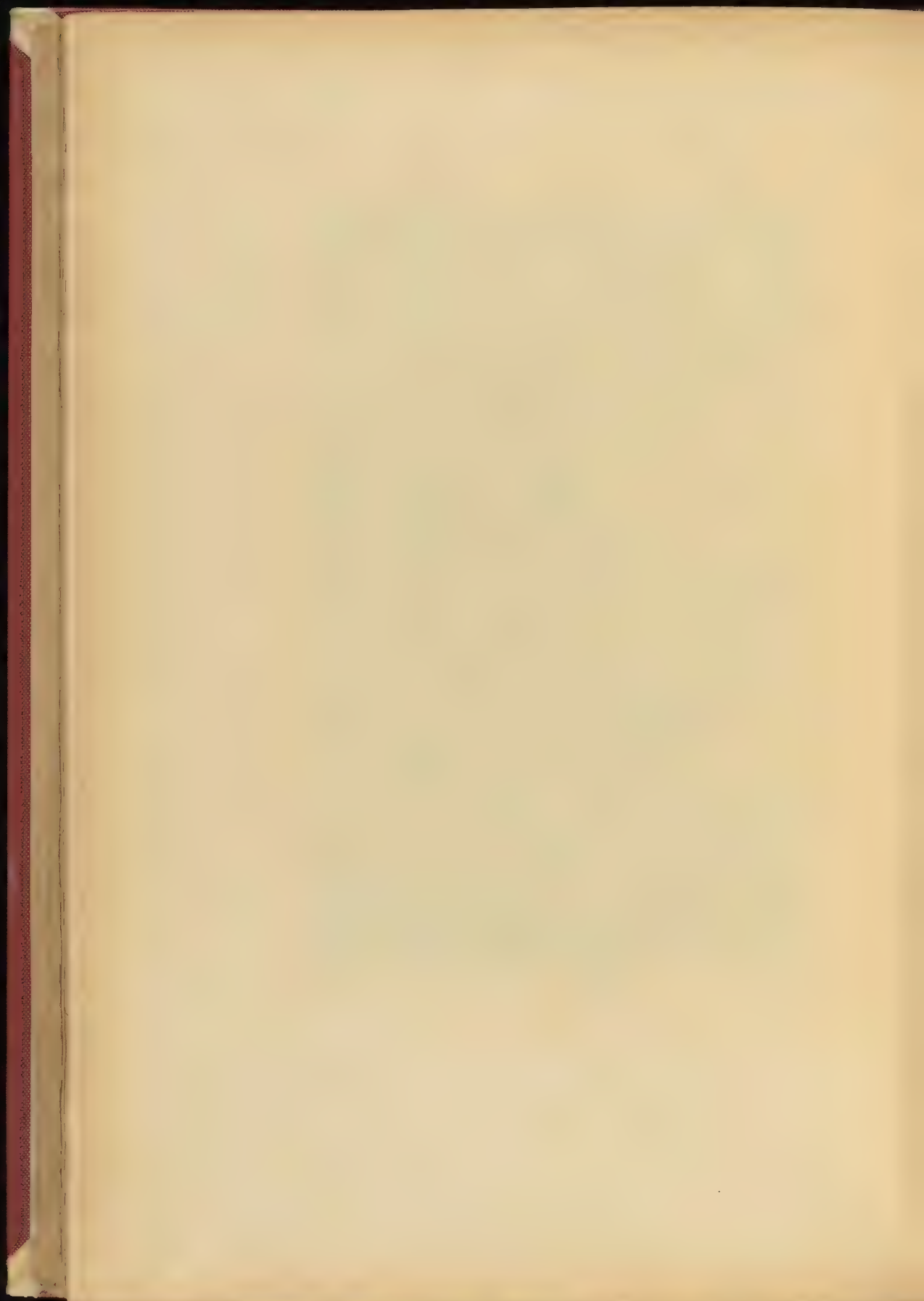




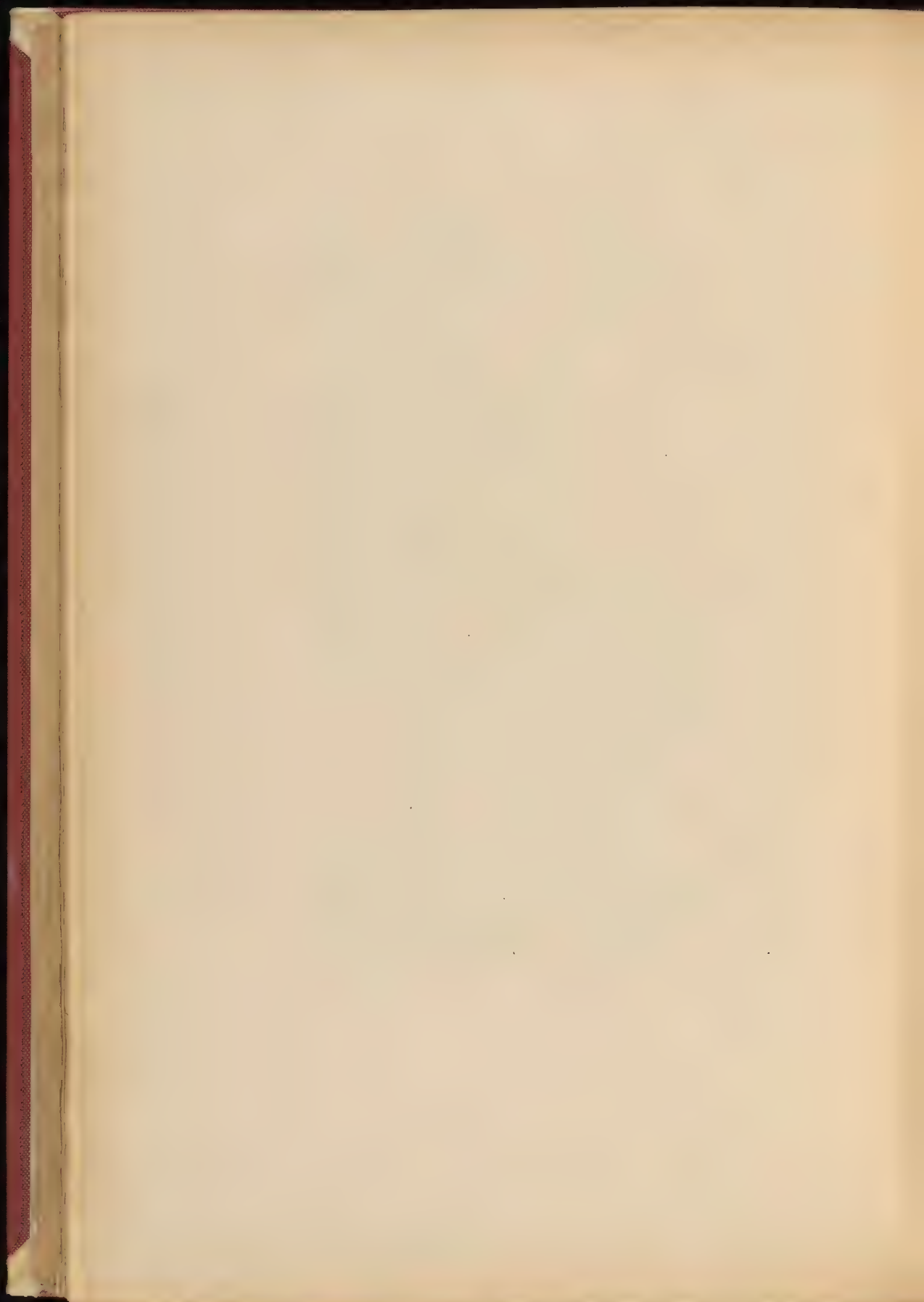




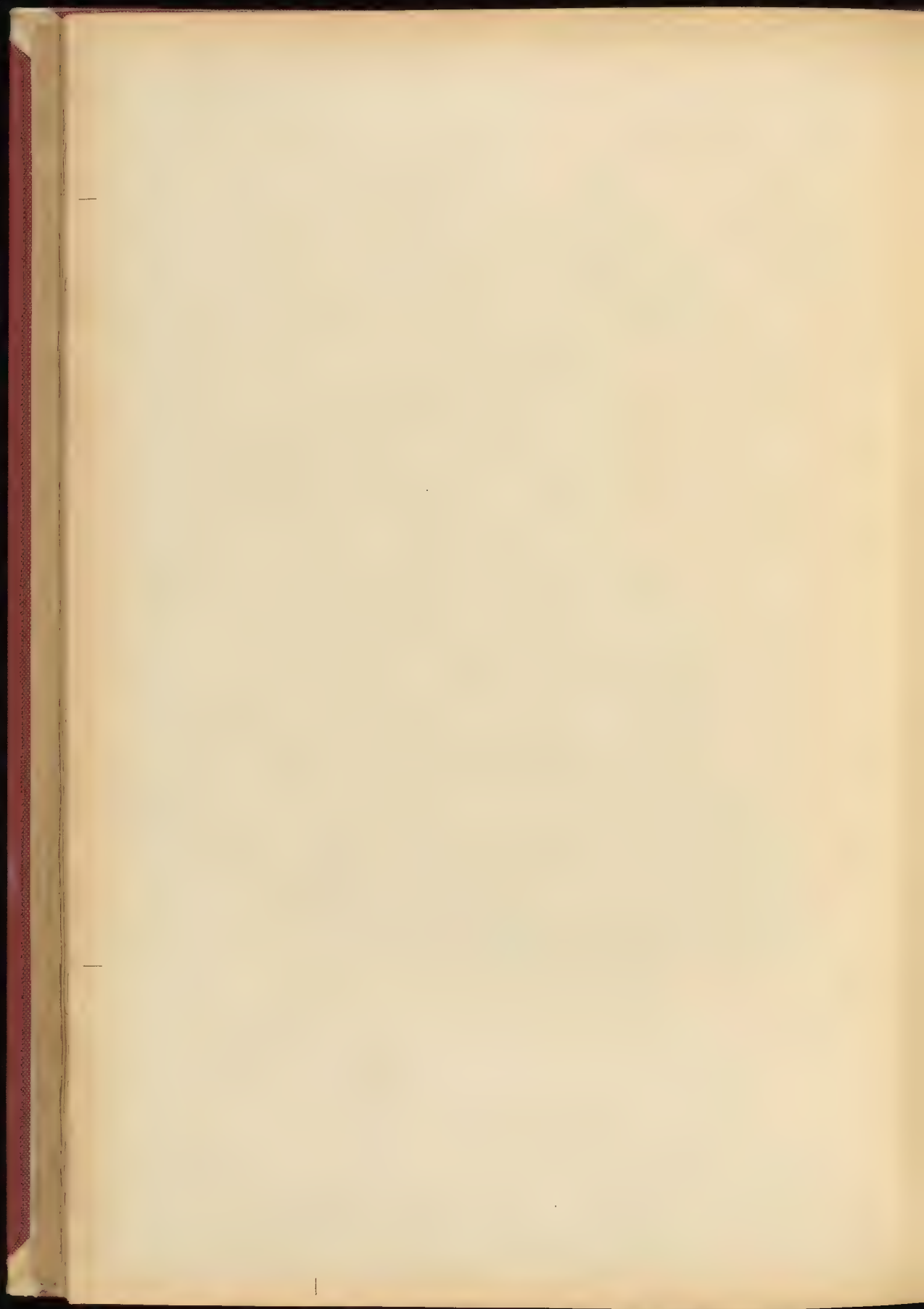












there was an evident anxiety to come out from among the vulgar in every respect, but the needed spark of light had not yet fallen. *Cercata la donna*. In 1869 his conception of womanhood appeared in a canvas exhibited at the Paris Salon. In this study there was no archaism to reproach, for the model was an academic nude, and in the freshness of the tint there was nothing of the past.



Then came the war, a cold, inartistic, colorless war, in which the sombre Prussian uniforms closed in slowly over a landscape of snow, in the midst of corpses of men and horses scattered over the whiteness of the fields; a war of savants, where one hardly saw the smoke of the cannon which sent forth the obus, where the battle was gained from a distance, where the soldier fell without a fight, without

knowing whence death came, or still oftener sunk under the fatigue of marches, or in the desperation of retreat. Jacquet gloomily followed these long files of men and of cannons which marked with blood every place of halting, and advanced nearer every day, with compressed heart-beats, towards the disaster of the nation. Like many, like most of us, Jacquet preserved from this miserable winter a malady of inquietude and hopelessness which threw something like a veil over the years following. It was in his picture called "Reverie", Salon of 1875, that Jacquet found his new point of departure. The yoke was rejected, the poet had felt the breath of inspiration. *Cercata la donna!* The vision



of feminine grace had finally prevailed over subjects of sword and helmet. It was a revelation for the public on its side. From this moment the road was plainly traced, fringed with blossoms, and rapidly leading to fame for the artist. I may pass by the "Peasant-Girl", a little too knowing to be in harmony with the free air of the country and the labors of the field; the "Poor Maiden" addressed more feelingly the imagination, with her guileless and suffering expression. I will leave aside likewise the "Joan of Arc", a subject connecting within itself the past and present tastes of the artist, the warrior and the woman, sweetness and strength, the glittering arms and the long blond hair. "The Minuet" was a complete achievement, the work of the artist at his moment of perfect maturity: here Watteau found himself again complete, with the grace and coquetry of the faces, the riches of color, the changeable tints of the fabrics, and above all the exquisite feeling of the air which was the medium for the whole action. "Repeat the Minuet in water-color", I said at the time; but the artist is



not one of those who can copy themselves, and where other painters keep portfolios for reference, Jacquet has a brain filled with sketches and embryos.

"The first Arrived" was another triumph. It was in a sort the apogee of the artist's tendencies, and therefore, pictorially speaking, the culminating point of the grace, the *brío*, of the eighteenth century.

The "Pavane" is the worthy pendant to the "Minuet". Some spectators have pretended to find in it certain countenances belonging to Paris society. I do not care to know anything about it, and I content myself with praising an

artist who knows how to choose his sitter, who is so fortunate as to obtain just the one he wants, and who does not have to paint a grand seigneur from a wretched affected studio model. Rarely have I met so much native distinction, so much sparkling and natural grace, as in the personages of this picture. The lady dancer and her cavalier in the foreground keep an attitude at once provocative and reserved, which calls up a smile unwittingly; here is the abandonment of instinct in what is most restrained and likewise most tender; and nobody can ill construe the behaviour of the couple.

Should I speak of Jacquet's portraits? Yes, obviously, for here the artistic succession finds its continuation in the modern lady, without changing its nature. Jacquet, dear Madam, is no "manufacturer of ancestors", and



if you have not within yourself something which connects you with the eighteenth century by ties of grace or beauty, do not go to this artist for your likeness; he has other works to achieve, and he loves to express in his work just what he has most at heart. What he has at heart is to demonstrate that there exists something besides the prosaic, something besides the gray, the coal, the mire, and the tireless throats of Gaffer gossiping with Gammer.

Look at the series of portraits he has painted: M^{me} de Murard, an olive

physiognomy, expressive but reserved; the Marchioness de Langle, whose calm blond beauty reminds one of the great dames painted by Pierre Mignard; the Countess M. de Caraman, daughter of the Duc de Padoue, a portrait that made a grand effect by the very simplicity with which it was painted; M^{me} Milon de la Verteville, where an elegant bearing and happy vivacity gave the artist occasion to develop all the resources of his talent; the Duchess de Bisaccia, whose admirably aristocratic contours recall that superb and majestic Marie de Médicis painted by Rubens. I pass over the portraits of M^{mes} de Montbrun, de Lambertye, de Béchevet, Maurice Hennessy and the brune Countess Jacquemont. I may not cast more than a passing glance of admiration on the most admirable of all the portraits done by Jacquet, that of the Countess of Brigode, wherein the relief and modelling, the vivacity of the tint and the glance, the delicacy of the features and of the play of light



make up a quite exceptional work; I will only signal a delicious blond head of an infant, such a head as Murillo never had for model, Charles-Antoine de Charette; and with these short allusions I can arrive the sooner at two portraits which more nearly concern this essay; that of the Countess of Ganay in Pilgrim's costume — a perfect nosegay of rose, red and white, painted in water-colors and most marvellously shaded in a scale of lovely reds; and finally the portrait of M^{me} Alice S., that blond daughter of the blue Danube, refined as the sitters of Hans Mackart, graceful and supple like an Undine, proud as a great lady. Of this last model Jacquet erred the day he did not make a portrait in water-color; nothing could better express all that I have said about water-color painting; it is in a manner the personification

of that kind of art. We saw, in the exhibition of the rue de Sèze, in 1882, excellent aquarelles by Jacquet; but why need we re-kindle extinct disputes? Let us leave these recollections.

For Jacquet, water-color is but a means: with it he sketches the idea born in his mind, by means of a few hardy and brilliant dashes of the brush, without letting himself hesitate over either the outline or the color. These sketches have about them something of Japanese art, that art so fantastic yet so profound; which leaves nothing accidental in the midst of its disorder, and whose purposes and ends are indicated with such incomparable vigor of touch.

Must we give up hopes of meeting Jacquet again as a water-color painter? Yes, we must renounce this expectation, but not that of seeing new aquarelles by our artist; for what a man has once done successfully he is always tempted to try again.

Aquarelle has but one risk, that of sometimes growing paler with age; Jacquet has the legitimate desire to achieve a set of works which age will not affect.

Neither the idea nor the process will grow old.

The idea is of eternal truth, because it makes immediately for a selection of the best effect, for the principle of supreme choice, for all in an aspect of nature which is broad, liberal, refined and luminous. It aims at a lofty mark; what it shows us is an instinctive coming out from among the vulgar, without having the truculence to throw down a challenge — for all that vulgarity needs is to cease to be vulgar; the painter's will suffices to remove him from it, his talent and his time will do the rest.

As for his painting method, Jacquet is the pupil of Bouguereau; it is an honor both for pupil and professor. Bouguereau may be named as one of those who have most contributed in France to save the principle of the ideal



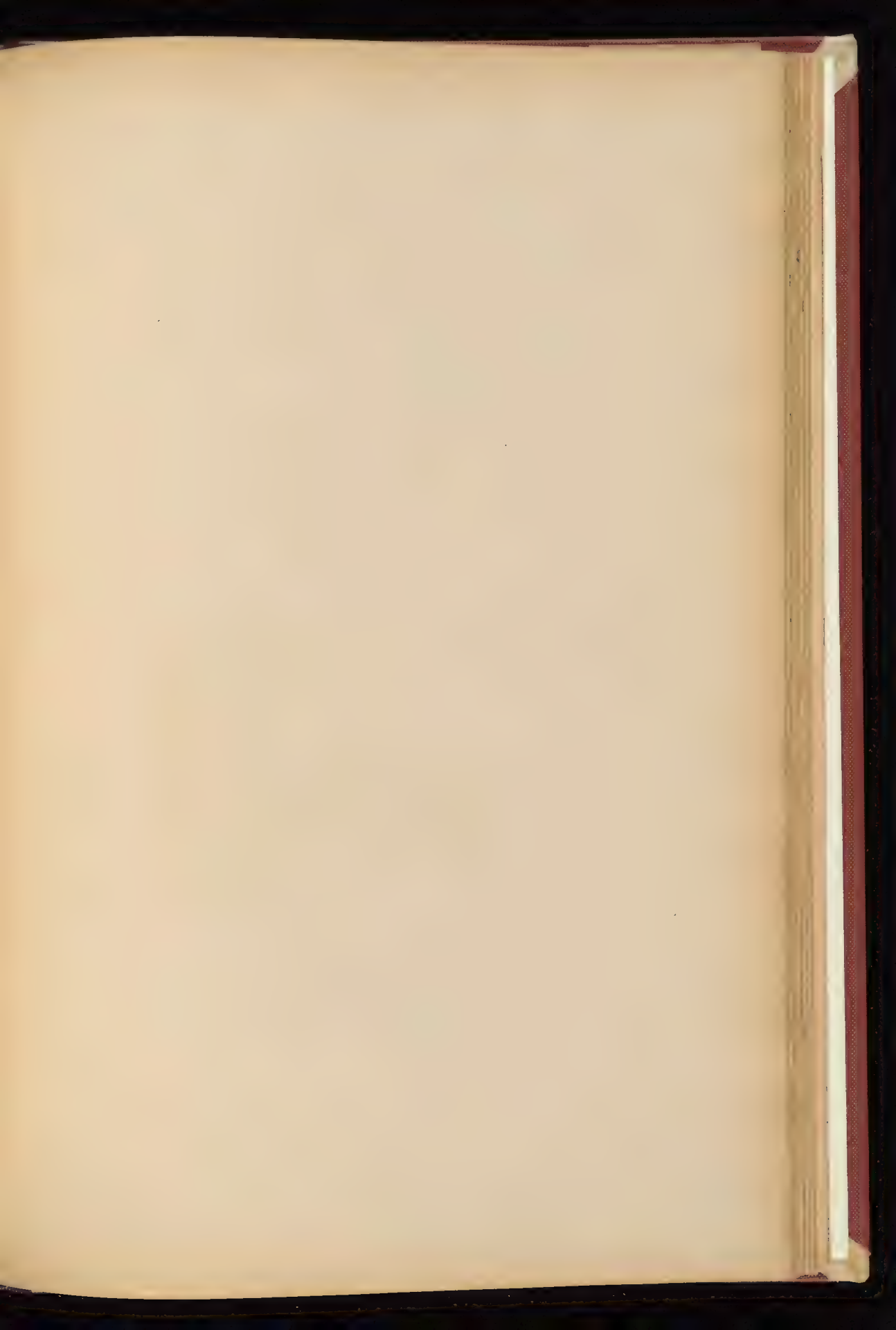
in art; and if we may sometimes criticise his sugary manner, his soul-freezing coldness of color, his affectation even when searching for the ideal, it is impossible to deny his purity of drawing, his intelligent choice of models, and his always persistent desire to elevate art above photography.

It is these qualities solely that Jacquet owes to him; grammar and analysis. His synthesis is his alone, his all entire, as well as the sudden and strikingly natural surprises of his color.

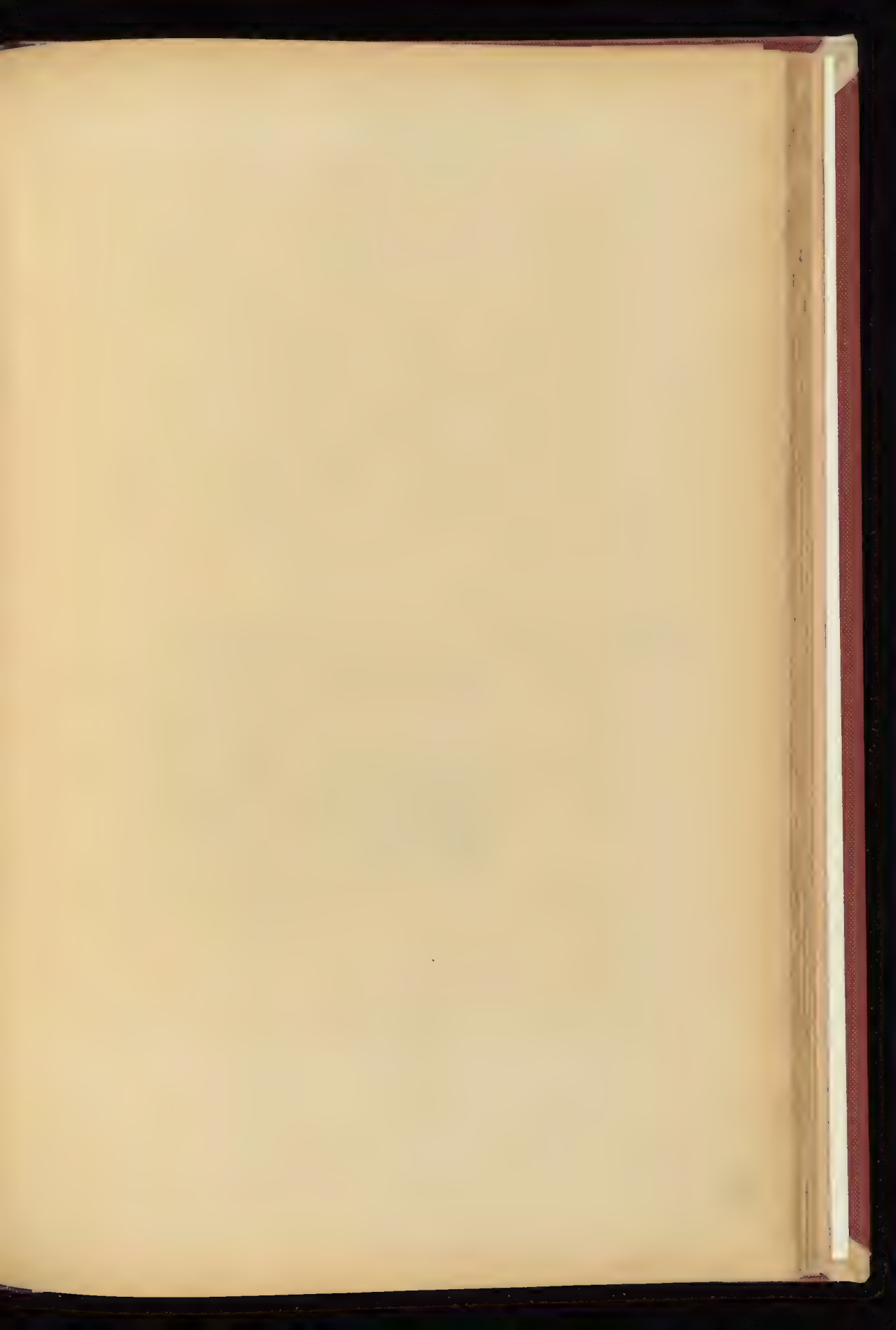
It is free for those who have no imagination, and they make a numerous suffrage, to dispute the important part it plays. But the ideal of powerful, nature-inspired study needs to be uplifted and seconded. There is where Jacquet excels, applying the test of selection to the very choice of what he permits himself to look at. This is what all the great artists of the past have done. History, when we shall not be able to hear her voice, will say whether our contemporary realists have been wiser than their predecessors.

MEURVILLE



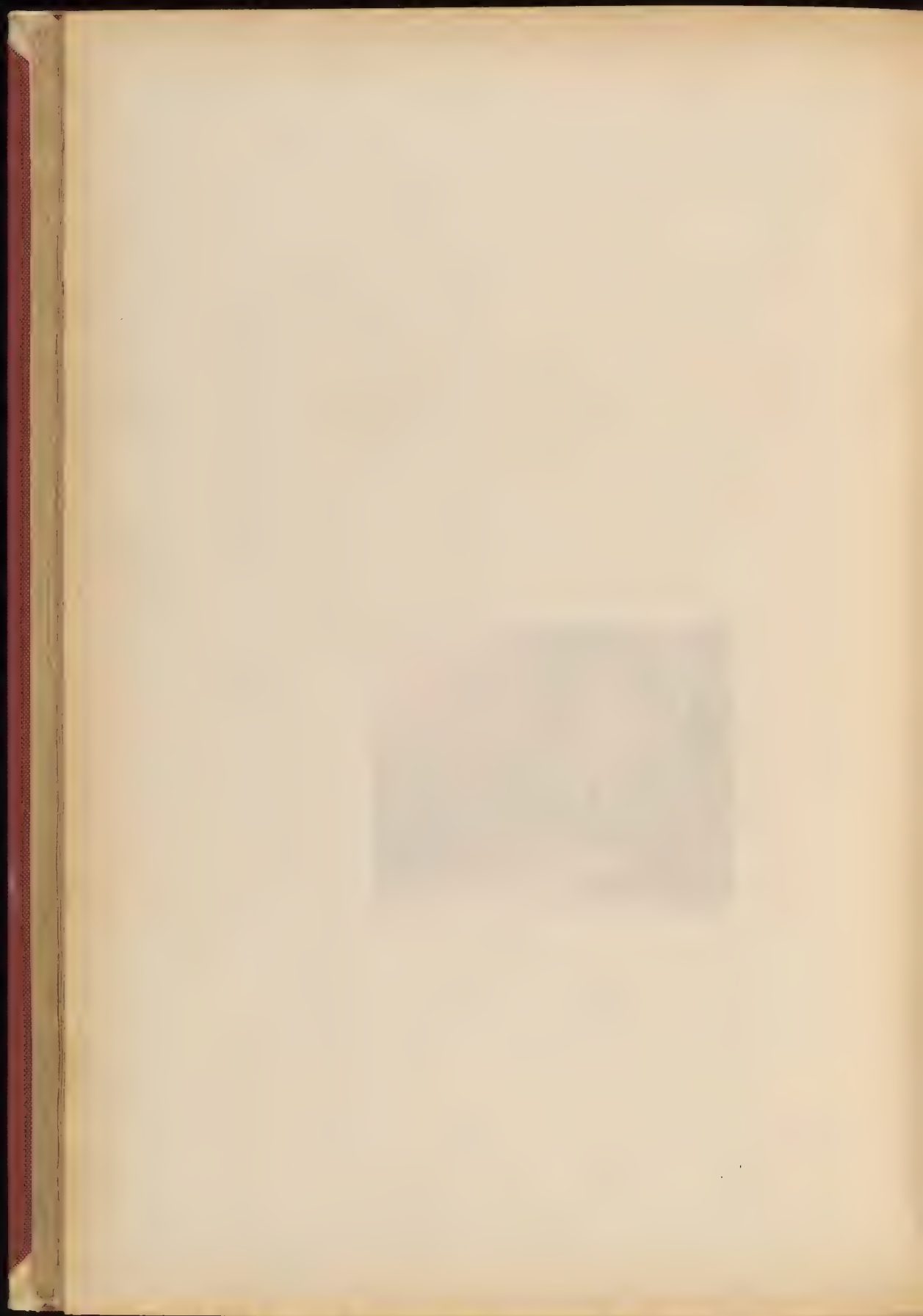




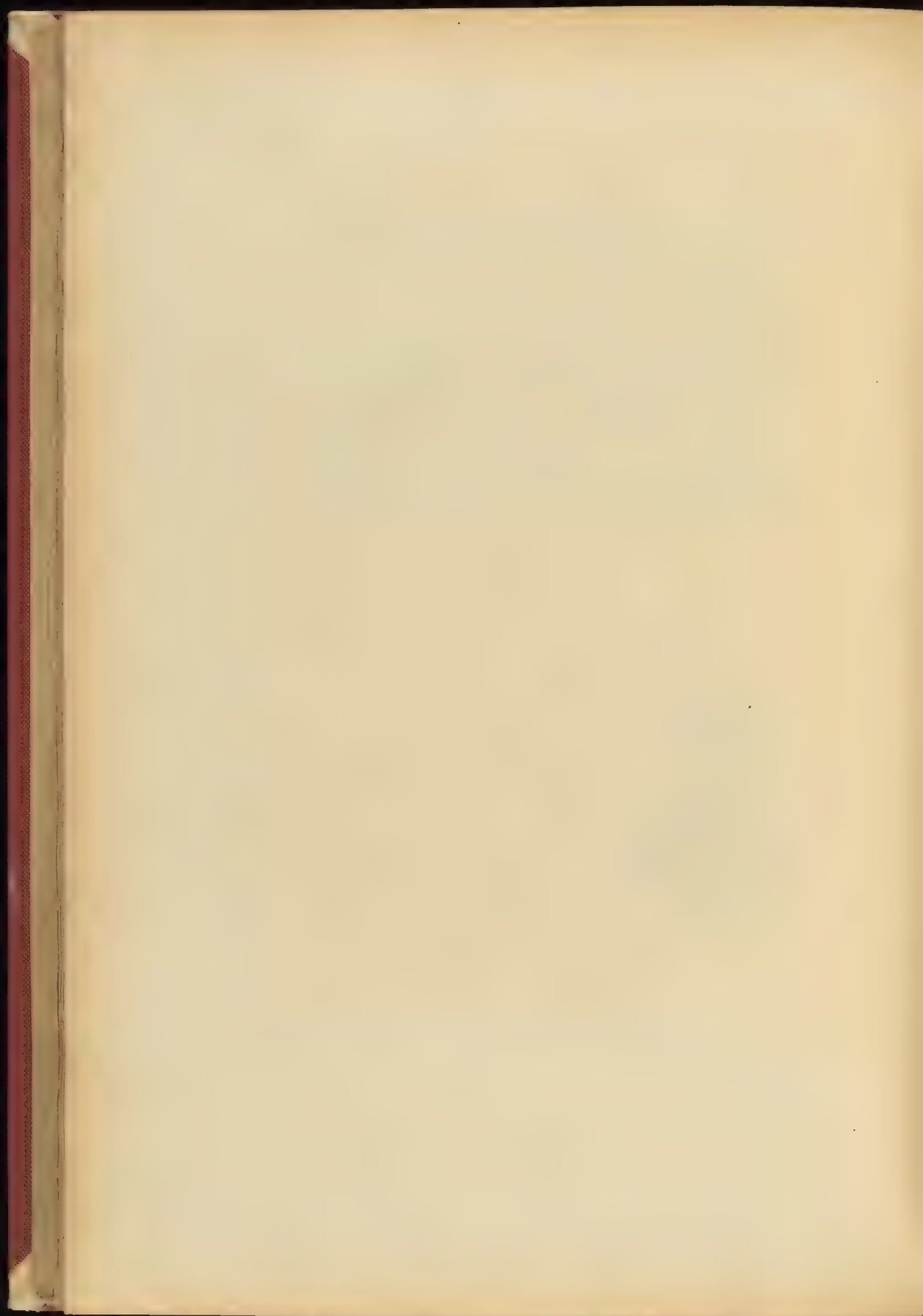




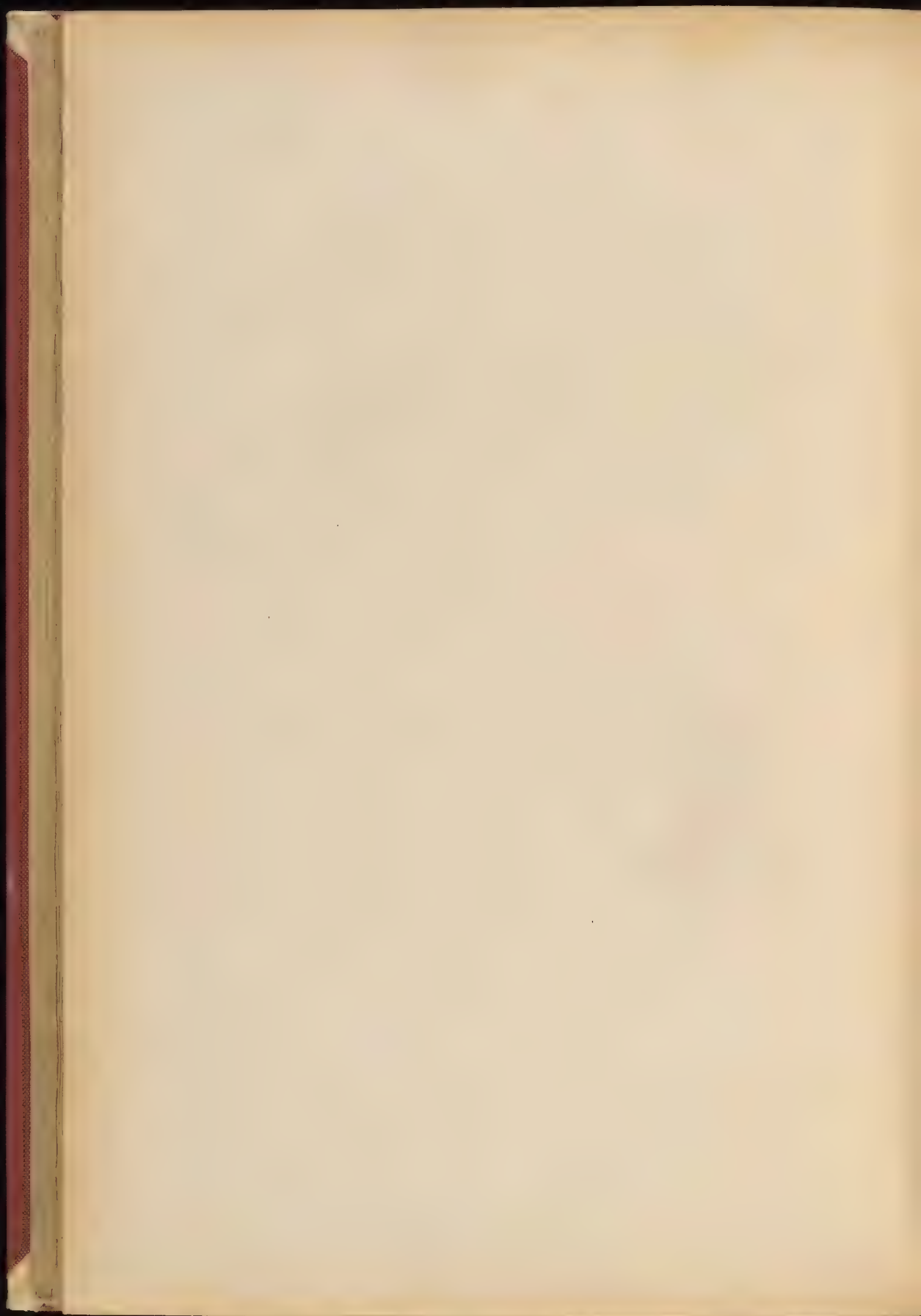






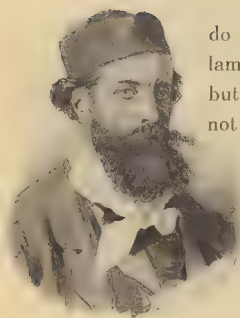








JULES JACQUEMART



In Jules Jacquemart there are two artists. I do not mean as in the case of Ingres, a painter lamenting because he did not go on with the violin, but rather two twins, handing to each other by turns, not regretfully but as if to rest each other reciprocally, the implements with which each one could produce faultless results without an effort. The water-colorist, born a moment later and unexpectedly, entered immediately into the same inheritance of facility and certainty as that of the elder, the etcher, whose heritage was ready made. The latter was quick to obtain his blacks and grays, his light and his effect, with pointed tools assisted by the bite of the acid; the other entered into command of all the freedom of sky and space, in

new aspects, with the charm of color added to that of form, by means of the swelling brush which flushes the paper with color.

And the public, by a phenomenon almost as unusual, has not begrudged in this instance a two-handed play of talent. The same admiration and an equal popularity greeted the print-proof issuing from the press and the cartoon brought back from an excursion to the country. The collector of etchings and the collector of aquarelles, two half-brothers not very civil to each other, would meet on the landing of that staircase. One would study, in the beautiful proof, the chiselled gold of antique jewels, the flashes of gems of the Renaissance, the bindings tooled with the



hot iron, or the arms of India, and Japan ivories and porcelains from China; the other would follow, in the water-color hanging on the wall, the flight of blushing clouds over a

sheet of paper, or foam from the blue breakers of the Mediterranean, or the powdery scatter of sunshine over the rocks of Menton.

The secret of the double success lay in this, that Jules Jacquemart was ever the master of his method and his will and his emotion. He left nothing to hazard or influences of the weather or luck. His prudence, the honesty of his statements, a kind of childish happiness playing through his absorbed gravity, as well as his strictly correct style of dress and living, can all be seen in his work by those who know how to recognize them. The genius was reinforced by the man of character. He was sensitive, acutely sensitive, to everything belonging to art, whether in a master of the past or in one of his comrades, in a classical rarity or in a caprice that had flowered out in the uttermost East. But in every study he has

left, it will not be found that the authentic diamond of his own individuality has ever been flawed or tarnished.

Assuredly, if the French Institute was regulated in such a manner as



to provide for the admission of talents of proof manifested at early age, Jules Jacquemart had the right to enter before attaining his thirtieth year.

My life as a critic comprises the piece of luck

to number among its deeds the first lines printed about this master at his start. I may add that I possessed his friendship to the last hour. In troubled weather, and when we were pursuing different beacons, our ships never lost sight of each other. I received a letter of his in March 1882, as warm as the one written in May 1862, about the simple piece of reading-matter which the *Chronique des Arts* published in relation to his "Studies and Grouping of Flowers", issued by the house of A. Cadart.



Jules Jacquemart was the son of an employee in the office of the minister of Finances, in the customs department. Albert Jacquemart was in early life a student of botany. We have his *Flore des Dames* and his *Nouveau langage des Fleurs*. Jules, while still a child, learned from him to love the infinite octave of their colors and to intoxicate himself with their scent, and even to draw them in their detail and effect; this led him at first to make patterns for industrial art

and at last, after having clung to them all his life, to order fresh and odoriferous herbs to be kept flourishing in his studios and bedroom.

But Albert Jacquemart has acquired solid titles to respect by his studies of objects of curiosity, especially ceramics. He looked up the authorities to be found in the books of the Chinese, in the company of Edmond Le Blant,

and instructed himself in the technicalities of the manufacture with the authentic Riocreux who achieved the arrangement of the early historic cases of oriental porcelains at the Sèvres museum. His *Histoire industrielle et commerciale* preserves at least this much of authority, that it was the first serious essay on such matters, and that it threw a little light on the chaos of dates, marks, nationalities and attributions. He made his son the associate of his researches, and commissioned drawings from him. He introduced him to the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, founded by Charles Blanc in 1859. The first things drawn by Jules Jacquemart were Japanese lacquers. Every one was struck by the look of truthfulness and art which he gave them. With an ease then unprecedented he drew the finest lines of the little landscape bits, the miniature waves, the plants and the stuffs; and he passed from these details, with a grasp unknown at that day and never since caught by others, to the polished effect of the lacquered surface and the lights beating up from beneath the amber of the



varnish. But it needed to add to these woodcuts the graver of Jacquemart the copperplate artist, the studies done in etching, the twenty-eight plates he designed and bit for his father's book, followed soon by the sixty plates of the "*Gems and Jewels of the Crown*", by the catalogue of the *Arms* of M. Emilien de Nieuwerkerke, by the maiolicas and India miniatures, etc., given to the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, all which revealed to the collectors of the two worlds

an artist of incomparable skill and amazing conscientiousness. He was like an editor who caused to be spoken in his edition the very language and accent of the district and of the epoch in which were born those vases and iridescent dishes, or that hammered ironwork, or those enamels now translucent and now mat, those Italian jewels and those French bronzes, which he suddenly made to fly out of the cabinets of connoisseurs and the museums of the government, over sea and space. Jules Jacquemart gave by his genius an impulse which still lasts in France, in England, in Germany, in America, in Russia. He has made the collector harder to please, and the critics addressed to these studies, where the past instructs the present, more scrupulous.

It is plain to see that his extremely individual talent had made instinctively its choice from the very beginning; his good sense made him cling to it afterwards. It was only at a later period, when he fell in love with water-color practice, that he gave himself over to the production of landscape studies; and then he never shrank from the perplexities that this line of art brings with it, perplexities of manipulation and of the heart, disturbed at having so much to express and at not having expressed everything. His faculty, in its essence, confines itself to matter as worked up by the hand of man; to the broad lustre of surfaces polished on the wheel; to the high-lights which gem



the salient points; to the opulent reflections sent from rich tissues; here was his kingdom. He was never at his best when he left these technicalities to copy with the needle or the graver an ancient or a modern work of painting; he then remains cold, doubtless from being too exact. He has no success in trying to evoke the multiplied aerial distances of the painted canvas or the special quality of a landscape. In this kind of work his best success was the "Buveur", after Franz Hals, in the Double collection.

I wrote just now that the style proper to Jules Jacquemart was inimitable. To equal him, we would need to be endowed with the organs which enabled him to form it, and these organs were of the most unusual perfection. One day, in the years of his youth, — Jules Jacquemart was born in 1837, at



Paris,—he was drawing in my presence, with a lead-pencil, on vellum paper, one of the mortuary jewels of the Campana collection, at the Louvre. Leaning over his shoulder, I could not withhold an exclamation of delight. It seemed that he must have counted the gold beads in *grènetis* by which the external chased band is bordered. "I do not count them," he said, "but I will wager that the number is accurate." We made the computation, and truly in a length of several centimètres set with the

minute globules, there was not a difference of five more or less.

On another occasion he was scratching on the varnish of the etching-plate, with his needle, an object of which he had not taken the trouble to make a preliminary tracing, although he had previously thrown off a sketch, doubtless to fix it in his fingers' memory. It was a powder-horn in yellowed ivory, decorated on the two sides with a Mars and a Minerve in low relief. His plate being a very small one, and intended to accommodate a number of objects, the figure he was working on was perhaps not more than three quarters of an inch high. "Do not you use a magnifying-glass?" I asked

him. "How can your eye follow the incision of the point in your black varnish?" He began to laugh. "Oh, no," he answered "a magnifying-glass would confuse me. I do not have to see the extremity of my needle. I know well enough how my fingers obey me. — I shall only take the lens after a while to be sure whether the acid obeys me as faithfully." Having bitten the plate before me (though he was justly a great hider of his etching secrets) he cleaned off the varnish, looked carefully with his glass at the gleaming surface of the copper, and held me out the plate with the knowing smile of a good workman who has succeeded with a fine bit. I saw, engraved in intaglio, all the outline of the personage, both his attitude and his character; his embossed helmet and his face like that of Henri IV, his breast-piece with repoussé ornaments, his greaves, and the hilt of his sword. It was evident that the phenomenon proceeded from an unconscious state of the eyesight and the exaggeration of the sense of touch; the will and the tension of the brain-power modify at every instant the habitual play of the organs.

There would yet be much to say about the etcher, the draughtsman, with his studies of objects made of every material, at every period, by every people. But it is of the water-color artist that the publisher of this work asks us to speak. As we have indicated, the one has been born without the other having created an obstacle. His first attempts with washes were a series painted on vellum desired by a collector, to illustrate with original paintings the specimens in the *History of Porcelain*.

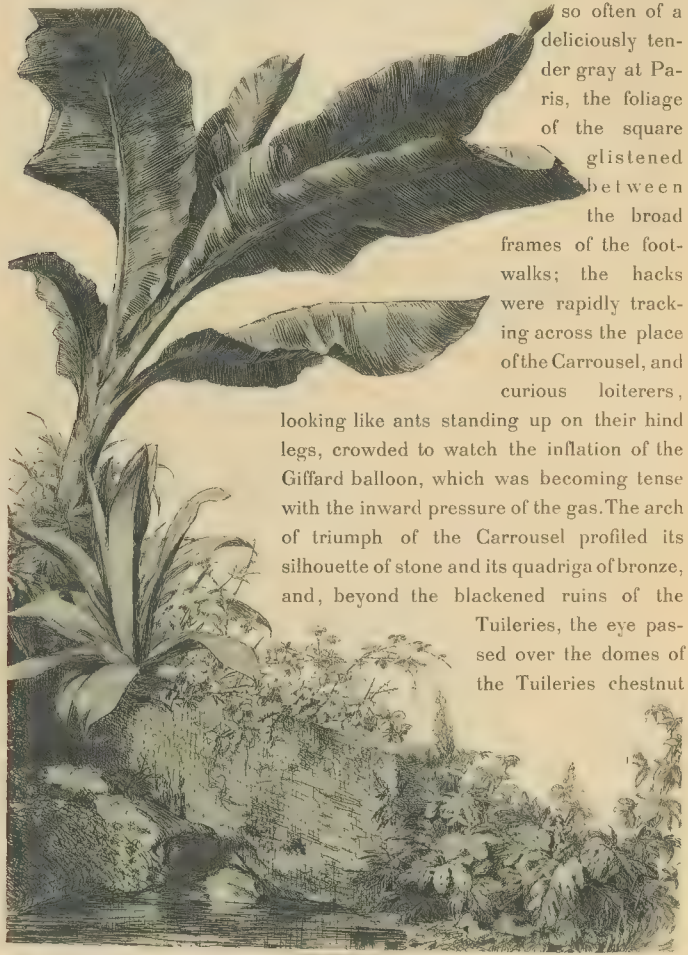
One day when there happened to remain on his hands some sheet of paper unoccupied, and when the inviting cakes of paint were stretched out in line, still humid, in the box of tin, he looked out of his studio window. It

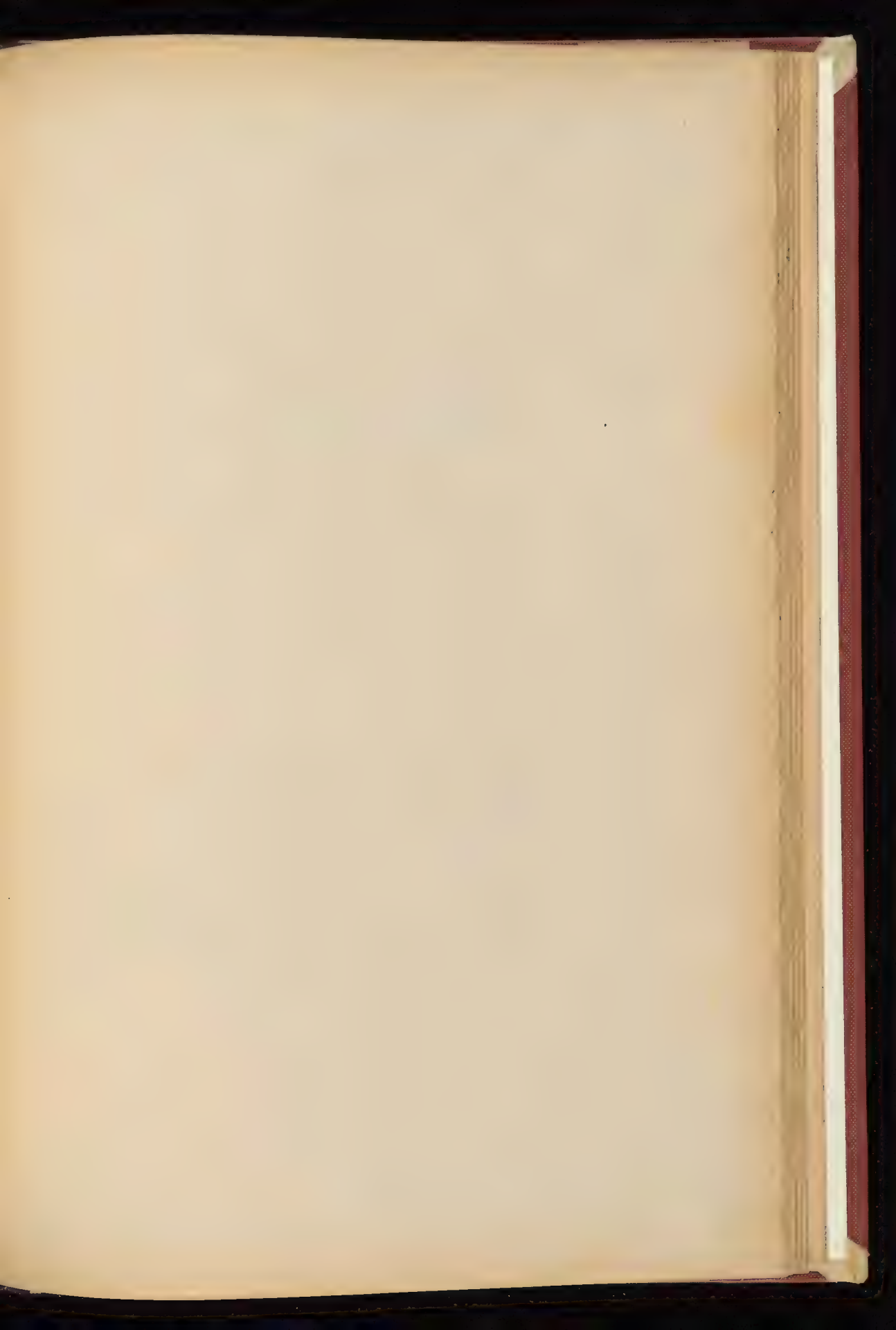


was the studio in which the director of the museums of the Renaissance, M. Barbet de Jouy, had installed him, and was one among the vast suites of rooms looking upon the interior court of the new Louvre. Under the sky,

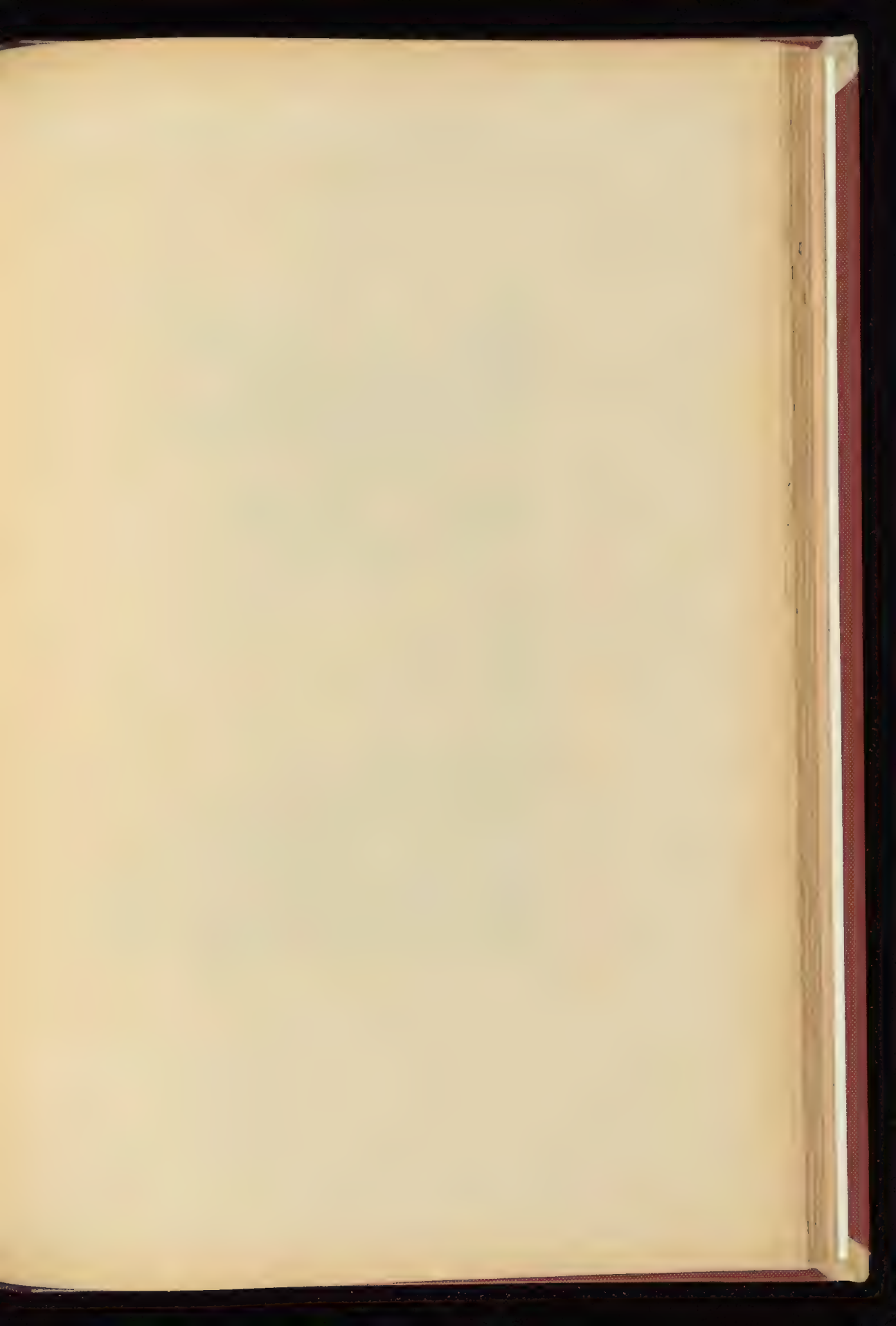
so often of a deliciously tender gray at Paris, the foliage of the square glistened between the broad frames of the footwalks; the hacks were rapidly tracking across the place of the Carrousel, and curious loiterers,

looking like ants standing up on their hind legs, crowded to watch the inflation of the Giffard balloon, which was becoming tense with the inward pressure of the gas. The arch of triumph of the Carrousel profiled its silhouette of stone and its quadriga of bronze, and, beyond the blackened ruins of the Tuileries, the eye passed over the domes of the Tuileries chestnut







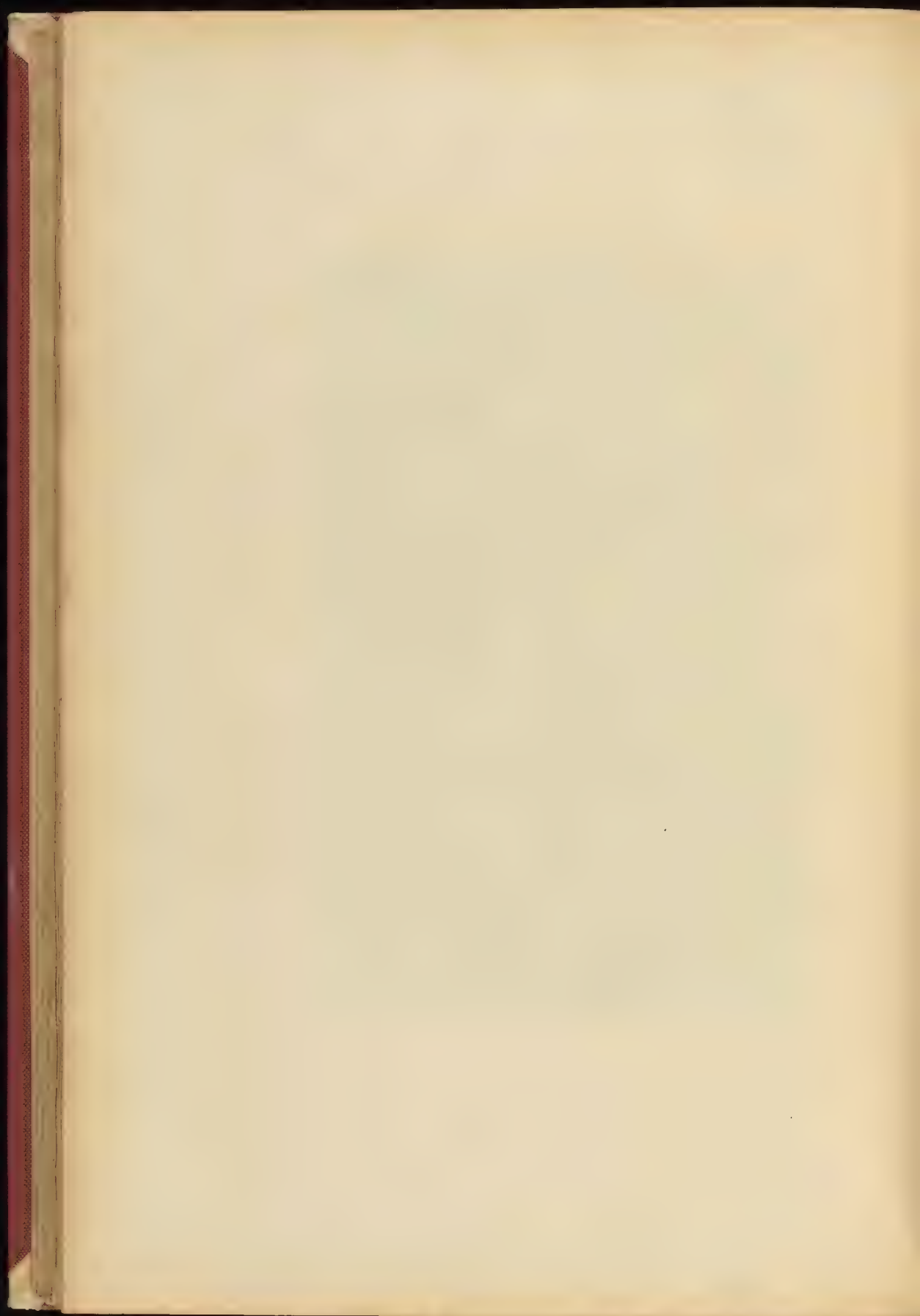


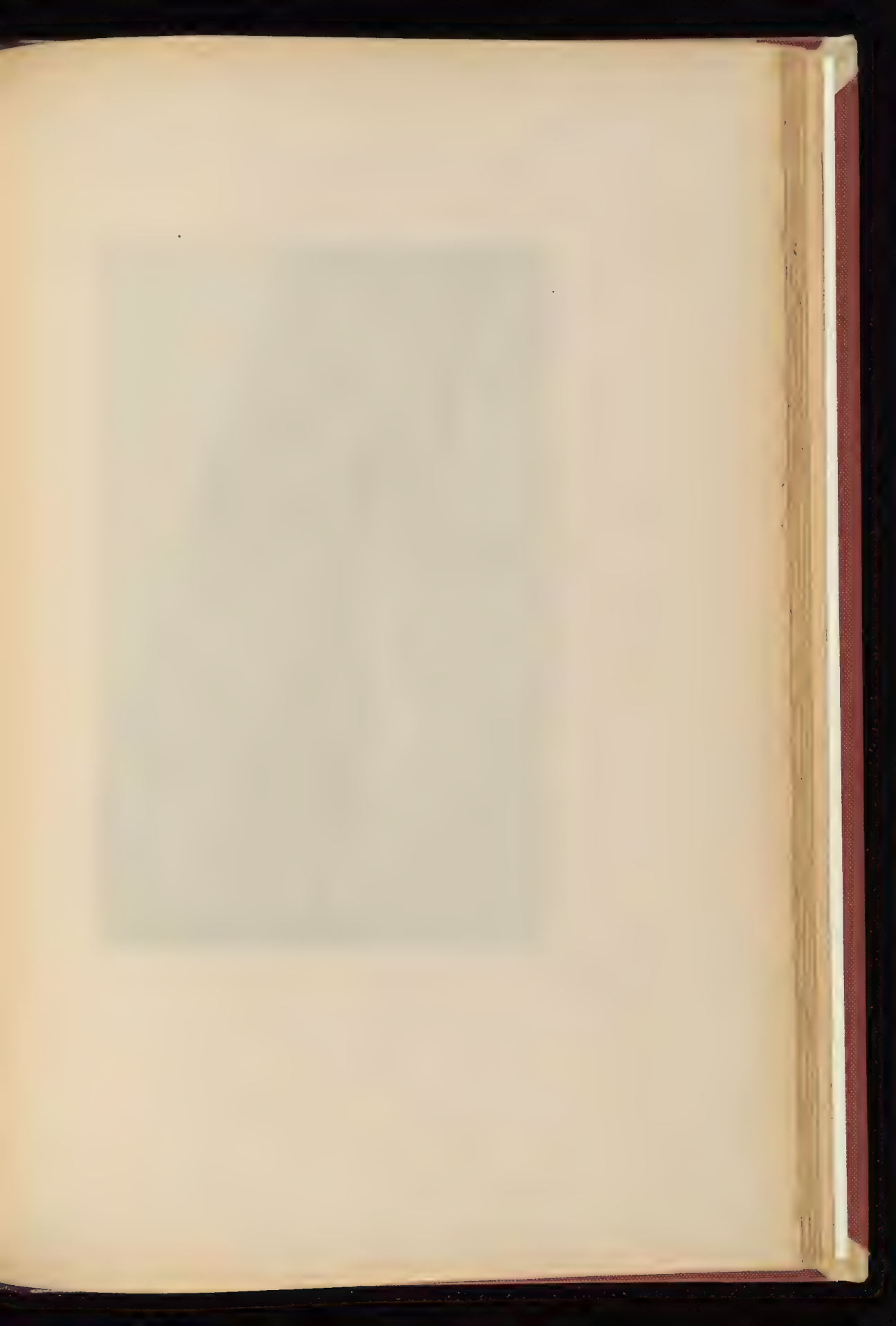


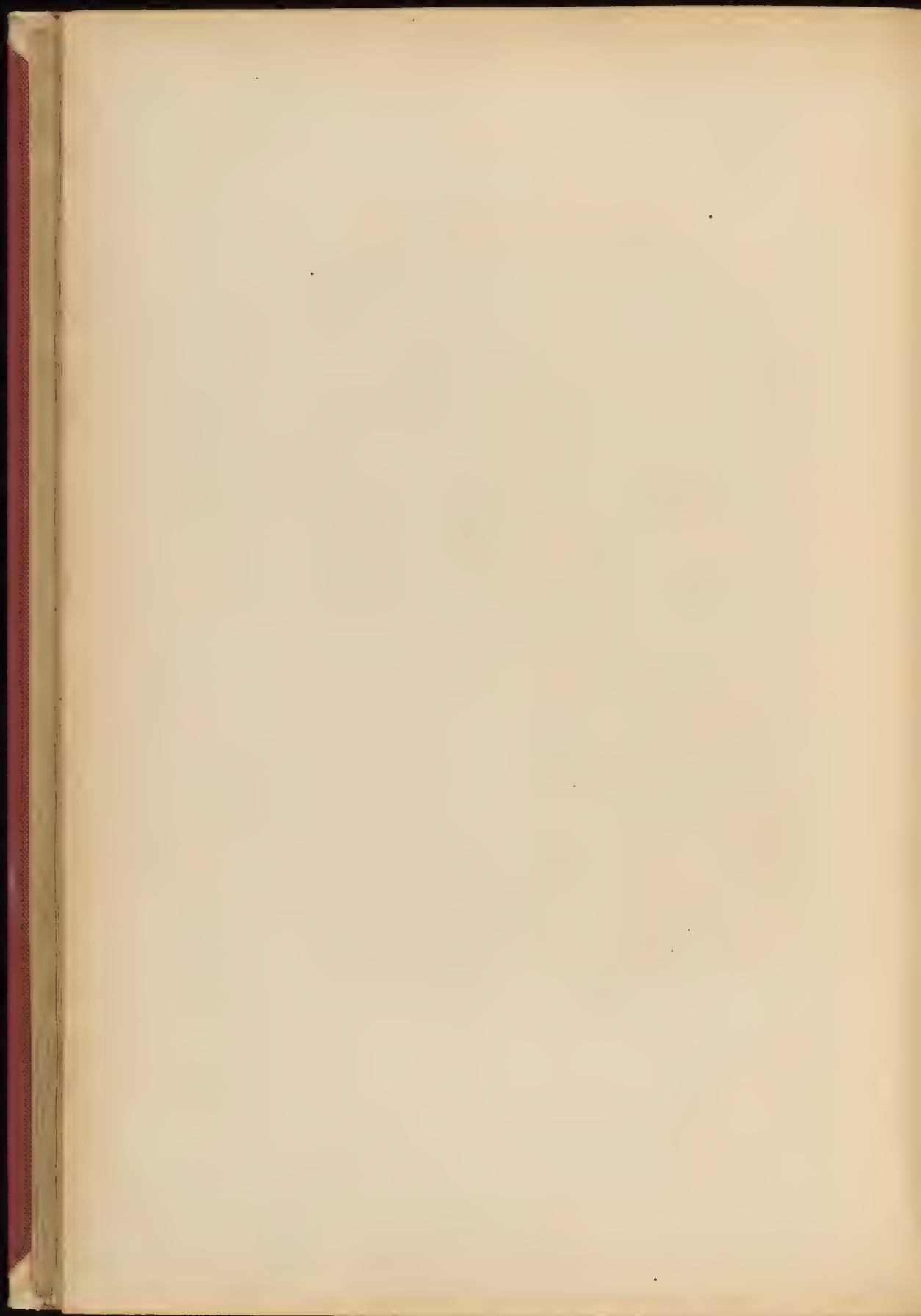




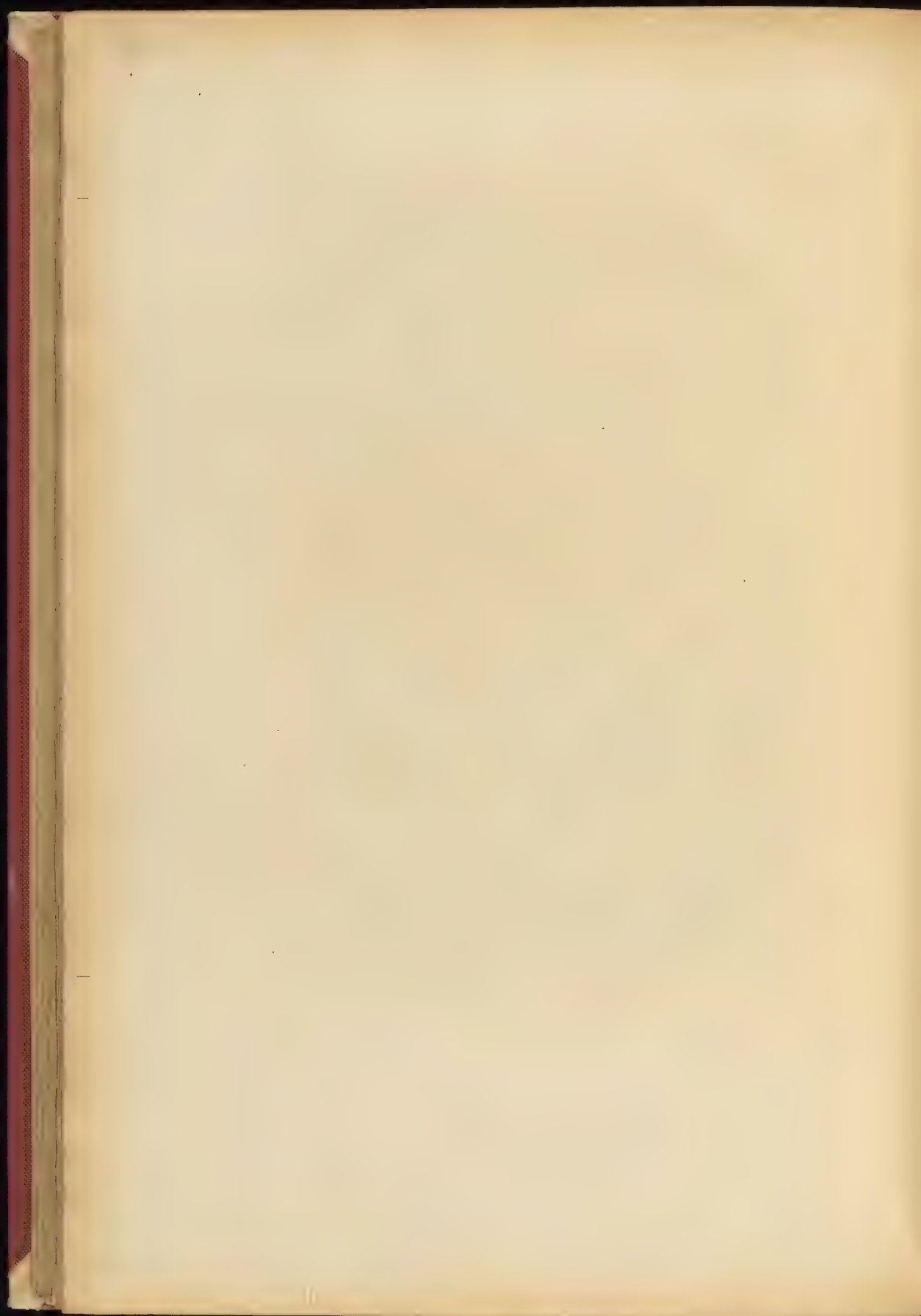












trees, as far as the green patches made by the elms of the Champs-Élysées. Jacquemart seized it all, including the long mass of shade projected at the left by the Mollien pavilion of the Louvre. He painted it, in summary and definite masses, all sunlit and reverberating, with an agile brush, in unmixed colors, such as he had learned to inlay side by side, without overlaying or mingling, during his sojourn in the ateliers of body-color painting for carpet-patterns or wall-papers. His masterpiece, which M. Barbet de Jouy bought of him on the nail, is now in the museum of instantaneous painting at the Luxembourg.

There too, luckily for those who comprehend these patriotic gifts, we perceive a view of Paris, taken also doubtless from the upper stories of the Louvre, but looking to the Latin quarter. The little omnibus-boats called *flûtes* scratch with a silver furrow the waters of the Seine, which bathes the islet Henri IV, at that time brightened by a chalet made of yellow pine. Then, the slated roofs of the place Dauphine, the buildings of the quays with their thousand windows, the red tilings which are terraced along as far as Saint-Etienne-du-Mont, and as far as the Pantheon dome and the Val-de-Grâce. Ah! what a fresh and strong city has been portrayed by this keen and honest Parisian. How easily one perceives the attraction which makes foreigners, even at the first sight, admire it and become attached to it. (One foreigner, who happened to be charged with the editorship of the present work, selected the two water-colors just described and mentioned them prefatorially, before the charming article of M. Burty was written.)



In this pair of sketches, again, and in all of his aquarelles which we could mention, Jules Jacquemart has stamped, with a quite modern print, a set of impressions such as our forefathers did not perceive, or rather indeed such as their narrowly classical education did not lead them to express. I do not wish to open a serious discussion on what has been termed impressionism, in these summary lines. Jacquemart, like every excellent master, never let his reflections about æsthetics preside over his manipulation as a painter.

He followed temperament and natural bent. His advantage was in



having in his service a consummate knowledge of shades of color, as well as a most subtle faculty of analysing primitive tints. We have only among us M. Jongkind who could be placed in the same rank.

The contribution of quite recent aquarelles to the second exhibition of the Society of French Aquarellists, which was reconstituted in 1880, was the occasion of a veritable triumph for Jules Jacquemart. A daring and intelligent merchant, M. Georges Petit, instantly opened treaty with him to secure himself the first choice of all which he should produce. Etching had placed him in easy circum-

stances from his youth. Water-color painting enriched him, while he still kept, as an artist, within the limits of the strictest honor towards his ideal, and never parted with a stroke of the brush done when he was out of the mood. But the native gift of happy facility had been made prolific in him by a gymnastic of the fingers as incessant as it was calculated. His accurate brain hardly felt the confusions of those nervous natures which hesitate and recommence, and his hand never slipped. If he made a mistake, he took another paper. But such a misunderstanding hardly ever

arrived. I have it from one of his friends that he brought back a perfect water-color painting from a promenade of a few hours in the neighbourhood of Menton, and that when the fit was on he would finish an aquarelle in the studio during a morning. Certainly feats of strength like this have been seen before, but always there was a lack of consistency or else of transparency in the painting, while in the case of Jules Jacquemart the painting has always a solid staying quality and a transparency so perfect as to satisfy the judgment after charming the eye.

Two collectors have powerfully aided him in making a reputation for these aquarelles, and their names are intimately and honorably mingled with his renown; M. Roux, of Marseille, who has applied for subjects from La Fontaine's Fables to the first artists of the day, and has received from them wonders of fine taste and ingenuity; and M. Alfred Hartmann, who has winnowed from the same ateliers a set of the choicest and most varied



water-colors. Each of these gentlemen has kindly entrusted to me a few of the letters of this excellent friend, of whom they had become admirers in becoming customers. I will make some extracts, which paint from the life his delicacy in matters about money, as well as his candor and his enthusiasm for his work.

In La Fontaine's "Eagle and Owl", selecting the passage: "One fine

evening when he was feeding", he said: "I think I am right in not degrading the scene by showing the horrible little owlets which are going to be or have been partly devoured." Relating to the "Head and Tail of the Snake", at the passage: "His lucky star launched him into the bed of a river in the wilderness": "I think you will like the idea of throwing the serpent helplessly out from the height of the precipice, with his tail foremost. If I had drawn him running, it would have been hard to show which way he was going. In fact, I have great pleasure in these experiments. But I did well to take advantage of that fine day. The rain of the past forty-



eight hours would have destroyed the peculiar yellow of the leaves which determined my whole effect. At the first fine weather I shall work at the *Laborer*. In marine painting, I am swimming at my full depth in a current of success, as they tell me. The mail brings me every day heaps of congratulatory letters which make me quite confused and touch me deeply. I feel it very odd that while I am living out here so retired, my works form the occupation of a whole class of spectators, and that the best class."

He writes to M. Alfred Hartmann, in April 1880, from the villa San Benedetto, at Mentone: "Dear Monsieur, how delighted I am that you have got that study of *Rough Sea*, which sticks in my memory because I had such a strong predilection for it." This was an aquarelle of lofty quality which had been sold for the benefit of the widow of a pupil at the French government art-school in Rome. "How truly grateful I am to you for having bought it! When I offered it for the Blanchard sale as my best proof of warm attachment for our regretted friend, I had only one fear, that it might become a little lost to sight from the hazards of an auction. It was this scruple which made me venture to point it out to you; and now I am so content to know it is at your house, in company with what you have already had from me. There is a part of

the other picture, in the lower left-hand corner, which would be better for being a little more highly modelled. I never noticed it until it was fairly framed. It is a trifle which needs to be added, and I will attend to it with



great pleasure as soon as I am in Paris. I am working, and with as much satisfaction as could be desired. But my health is very cruel towards me. It forces me to give up to rest many a fine hour that I would gladly employ in labor. This is not to

say that I am neglecting what you have bespoken from me. But certainly time, which is passing so fast, will never let me finish before my return to Paris the whole of what they are asking for from many quarters."

In a pleasant note dated July 24, 1880, in irregular hand and uneven lines the stout-hearted fellow says to M. Hartmann: "I am very deeply touched

by your kind letter, and very happy that you have appreciated to the measure of the price the study of upright shape entitled *In the gorges*, which was a parti-



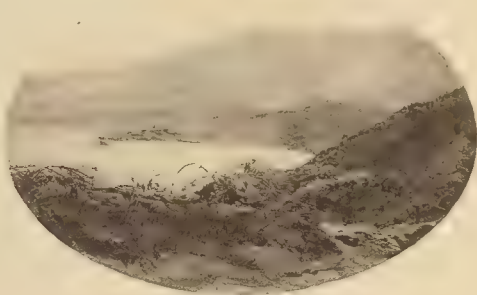
cular favorite of mine." (The collectors no longer treated with him directly, but with the merchant who took from him every production of his brush.) "Since I had the pleasure of passing a couple of hours with you and your beautiful collection, at a time when I was already weak, I have

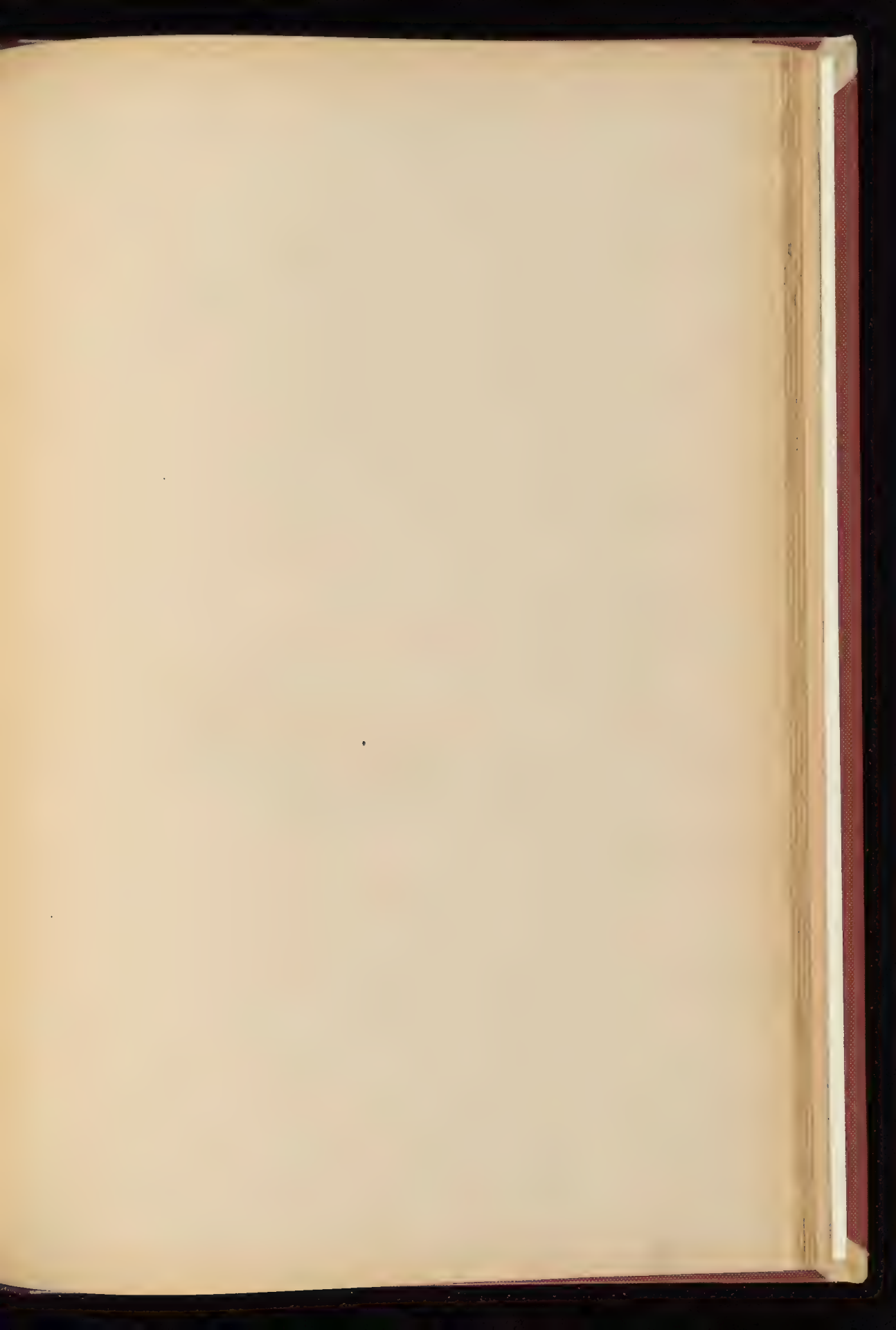
had a return of fever, and I am quite feeble and broken at this moment. It was making a study at the edge of the water, I fancy, which I am to thank for this, and besides, the weather has been so stormy. I pray you forgive the incoherence of my letter," adds he, after taking breath a little while, and then passes on to thank M. Hartmann for having bought, for a price probably higher than what he sold them for personally, one of his works, which he describes in a happy phrase: "It is so true, and at the same time so capricious."

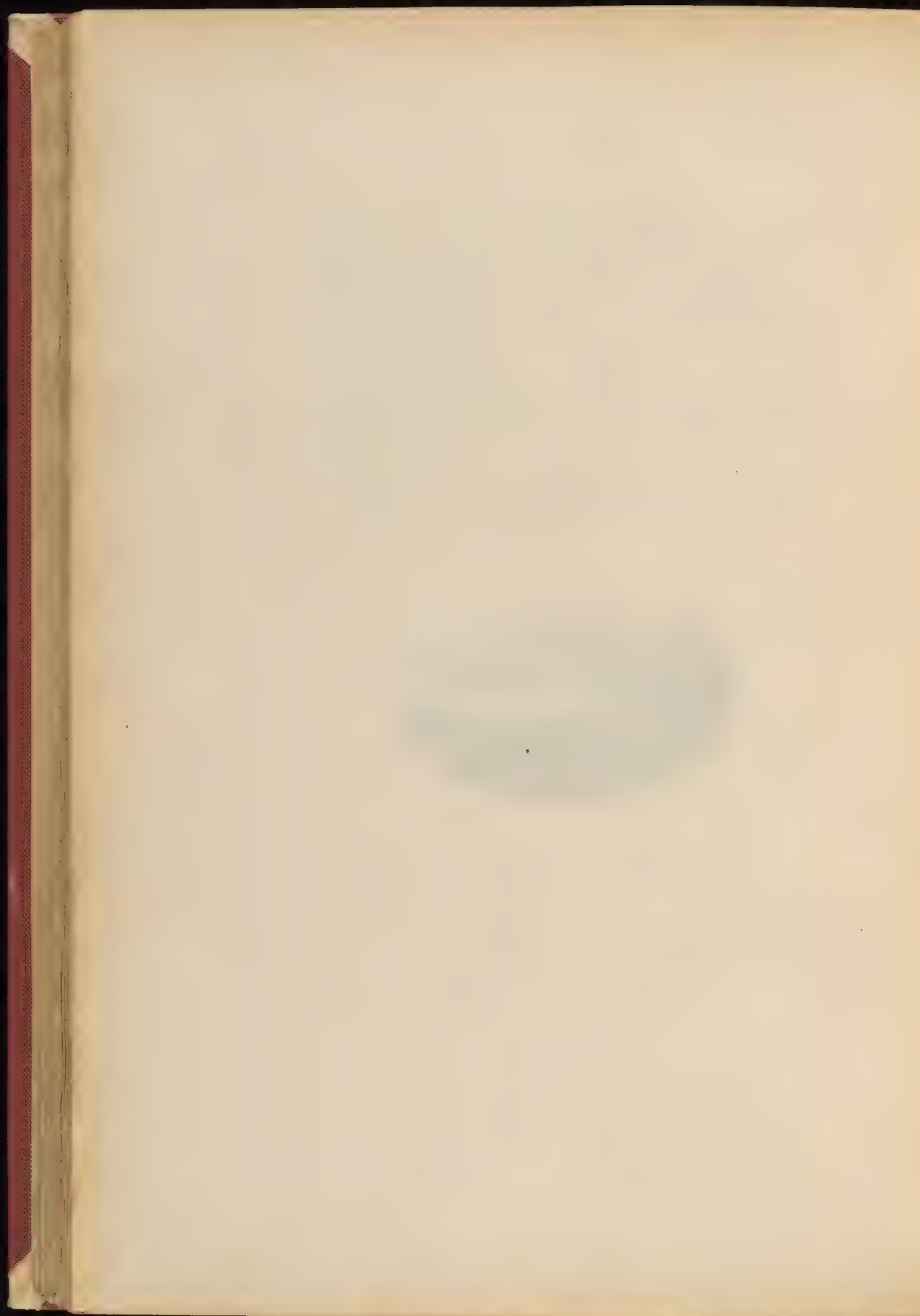
Jules Jacquemart deceased at Paris, the 26 September 1880, probably from the results of an affection contracted during the months of the siege. He formed a part of the marching batallions, where his conduct was above all praise.

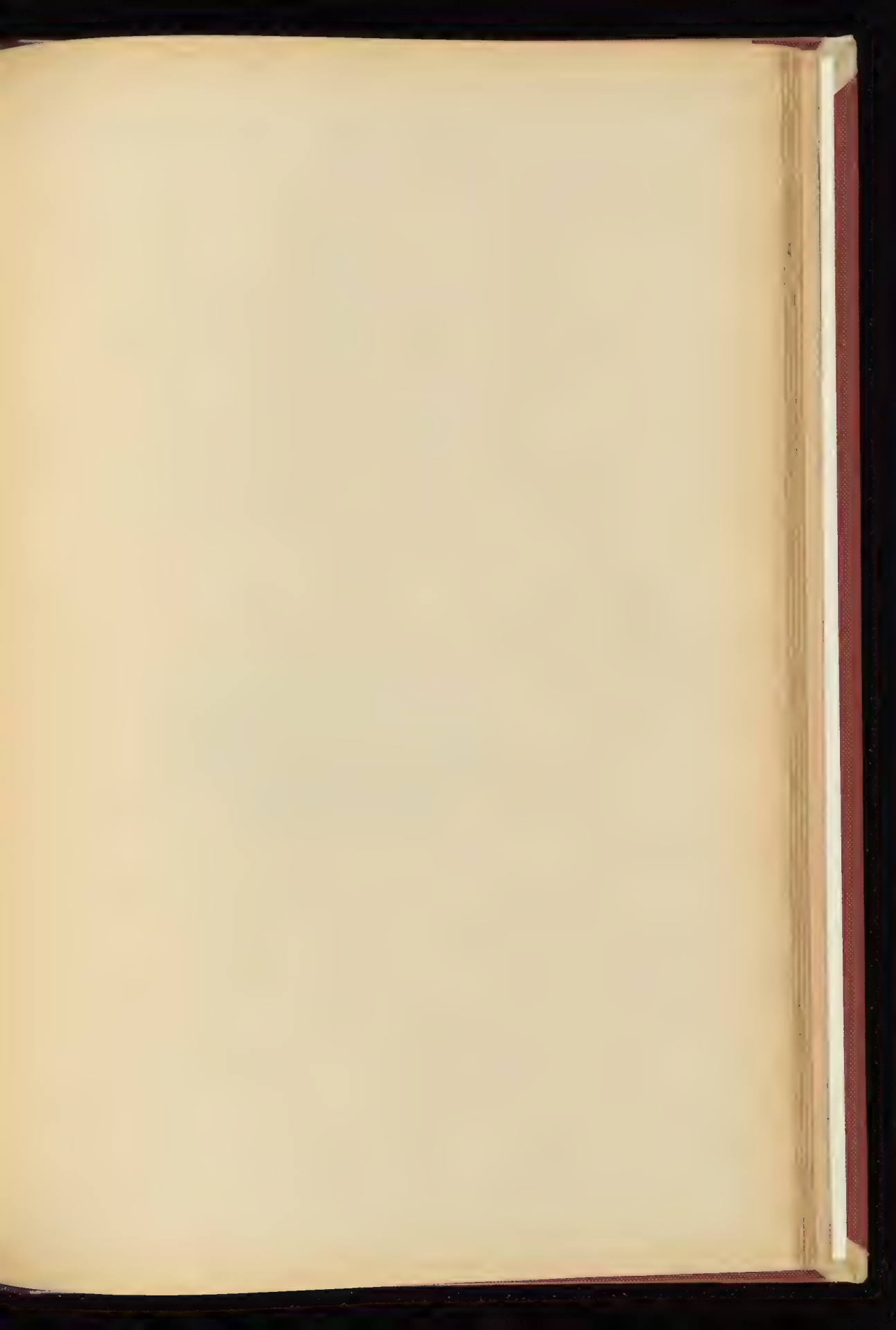
He was over the ordinary height, with a bearing of great elegance; he had large eyes, of a light blue. He had intellect and he had heart. He left behind him the profoundest regrets.

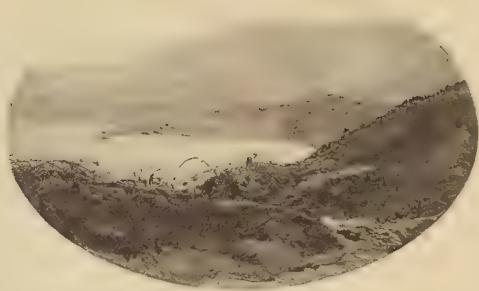
PHILIPPE BURTY.

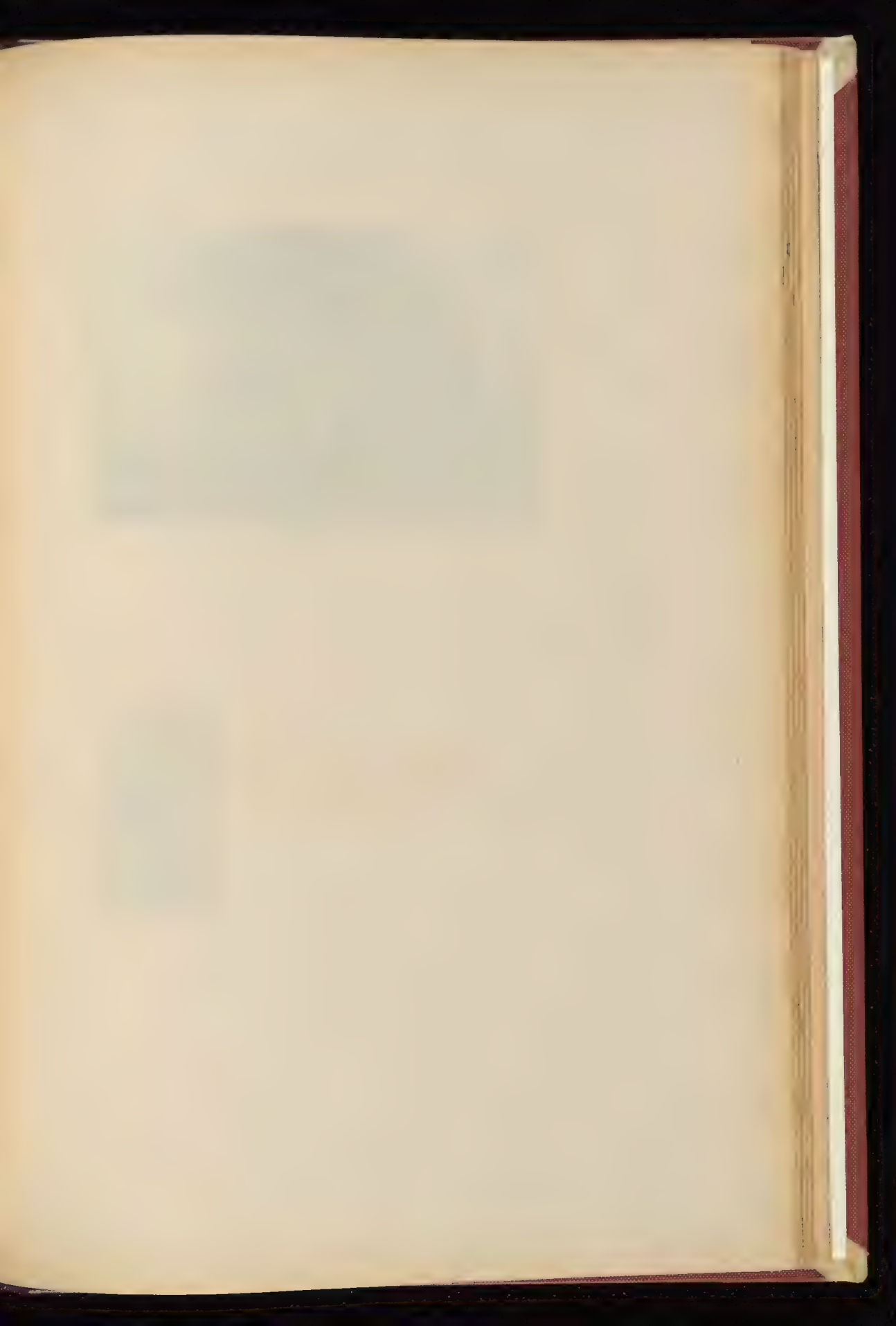






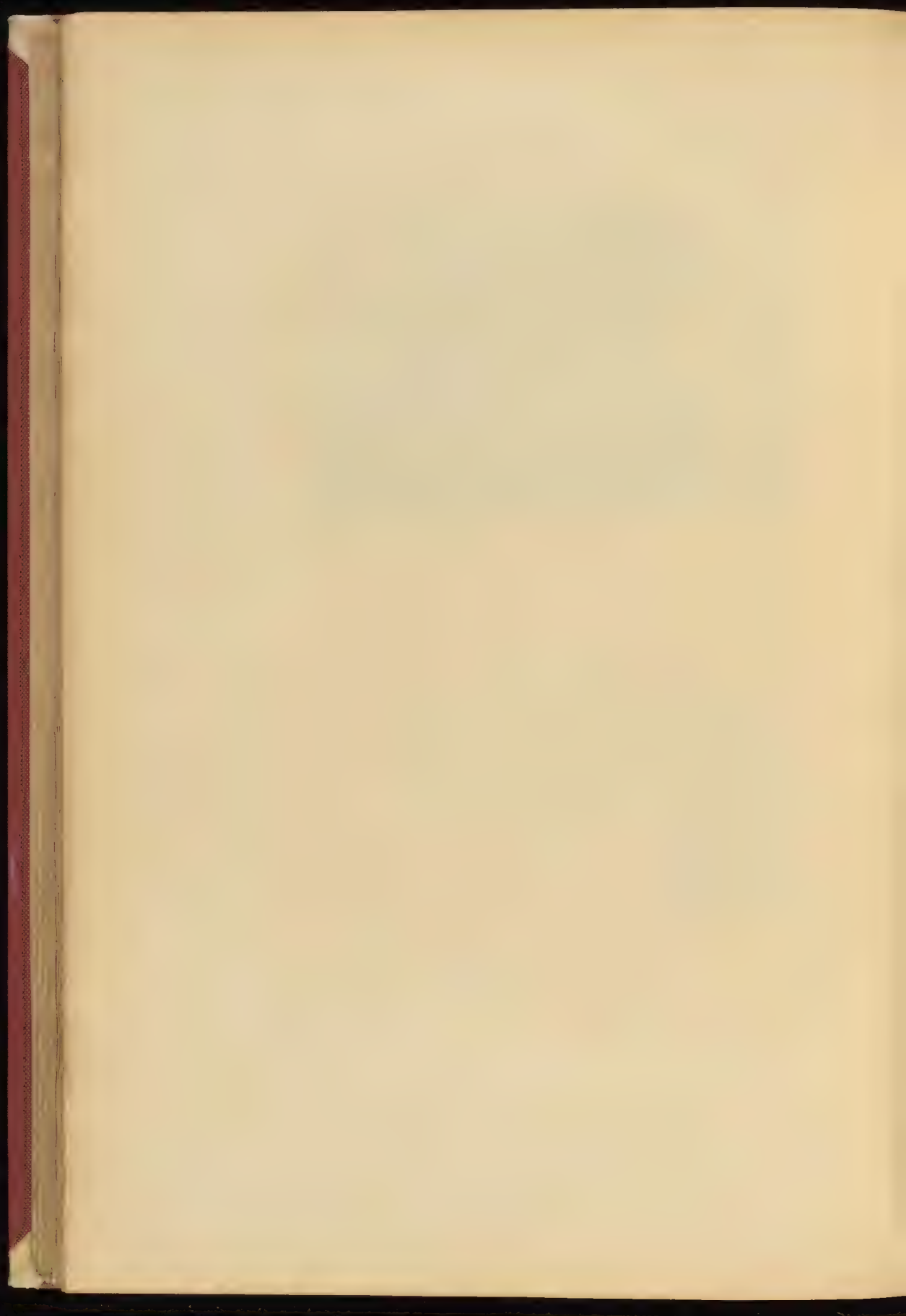


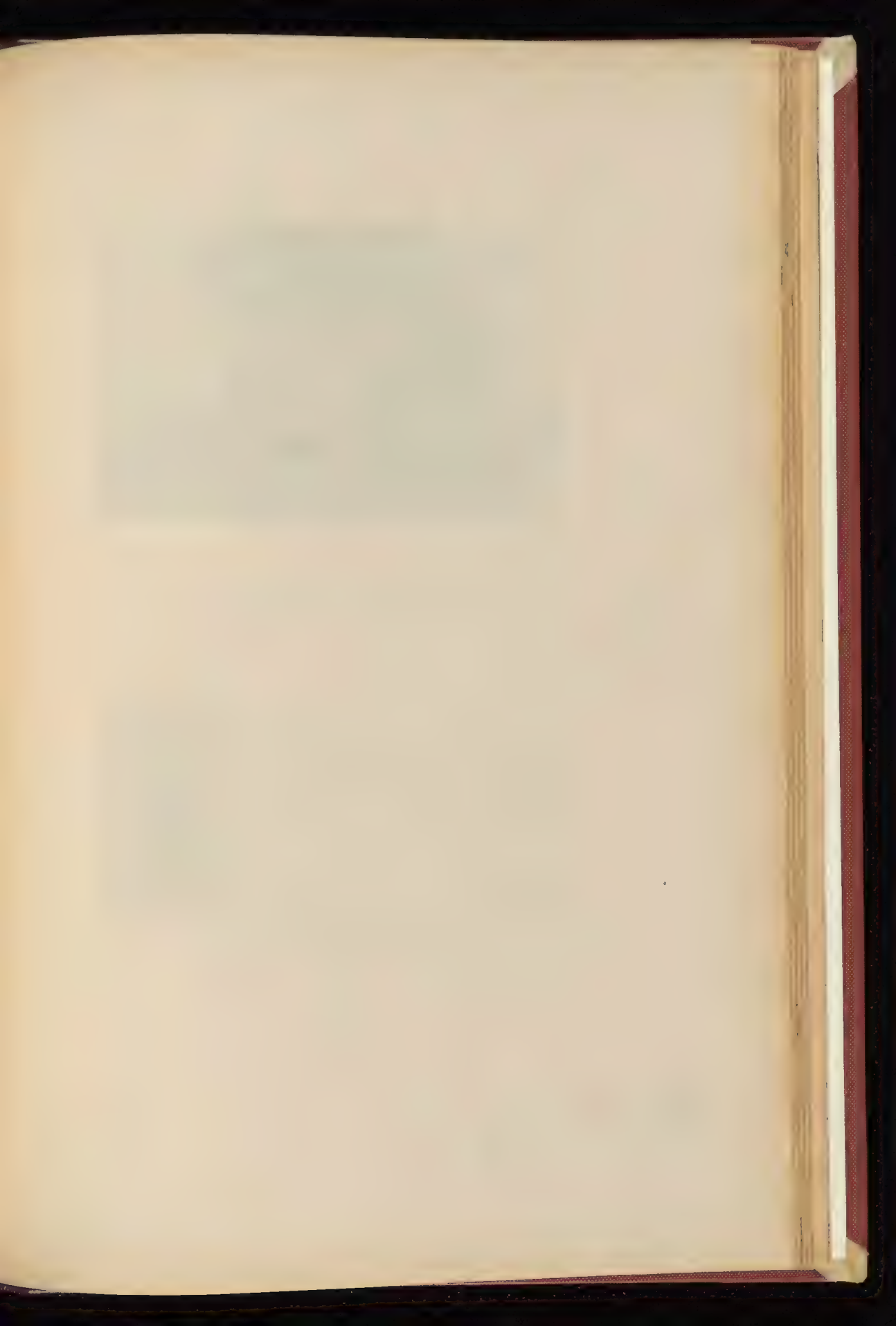


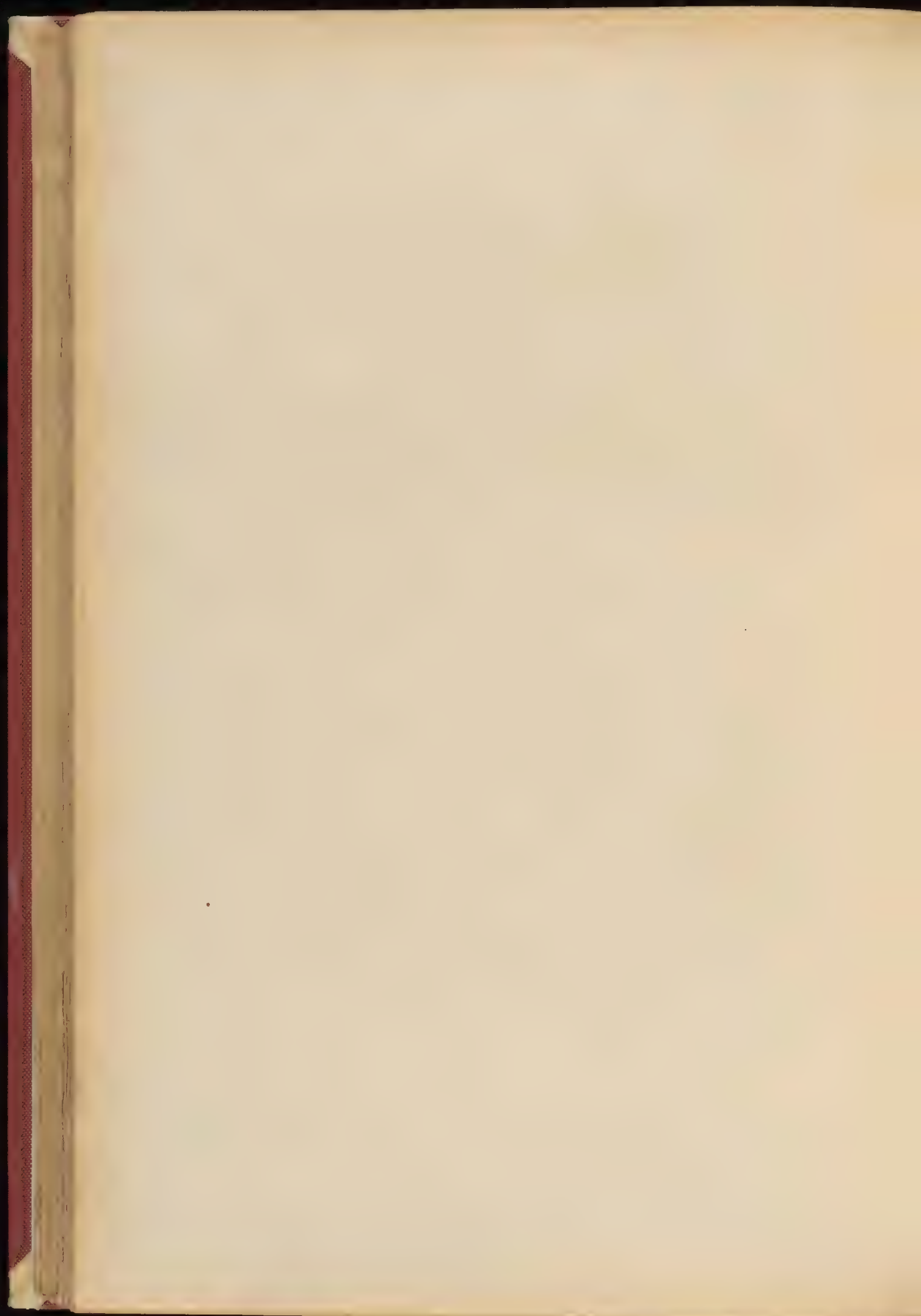














CHARLES DELORT



Delort has had the courage to remain a man of caprice. You have only to visit his studio to convince yourself of this. Elbowing a modern picture you see a sketch of the style Louis Fifeenth. The Hussars of the first French republic jostle the Watteau shepherds, while Manon Lescaut looks at the group of Daphnis and Chloe. A heaping up of the most incoherent objects, a rummage-pile, a veritable kaleidoscope, rolling off before the eye of the amazed visitor, these are what result from such varying moods and such universal eclecticism; they are the signs of a variegated kind of art, for our painter is conscientious above everything, and the presence of a toy or a piece of armor or a morsel of tissue proves that he has painted from it, none

of his work being done without the original model remaining in sight. His family, who were art-lovers, imagined from certain childish attempts that he had a call for the craft, yet his lack of perseverance, shown impartially and negligently in everything he was set to do, made his friends surmise that he would throw away his brushes long before any serious piece of work would be achieved.



These natural misgivings have not been realized. Delort, notwithstanding the erratic course of his Southern temperament, which caused him to dash at a pleasure or a task with the same impetuosity and energy, has always come faithfully back to his painting. — It is a passion which is perhaps alone in securing his fidelity.

His hot blood and these vagaries and long terms of idleness, at the very period of life when a painter owes himself all entire and without exception to the most serious, continuous study, have perhaps done him harm in the past, and have delayed him, it may be, in the career which his undeniable and original genius summons him to pursue. In any case, the hours lost to labor have nowise altered his talent for composition, which is still his master faculty, while he is gaining day by day — Charles Delort being still a young fellow — that firmness of touch which played him truant sometimes when he was beginning.

His first attempts were directed by Duhousset. It was this professor who started de Neuville, and he decided the career of our artist also. M. Duhousset consented to take entire charge of young Charles Delort. His mission was to prepare him and cause him to enter the military school, then the *École d'état-major*.

“Secure your reception”; he would repeat to him, “you shall paint afterwards, and you can give in your resignation whenever your desires dictate it to you.”

Duhousset was at that time professor of design in the college of Lorient, in Brittany. He was besides attached to the commission of pyro-

techny and ballistics of Gavres. 'Twas an artist lined with a mathematician of rare quality. Charles Delort had a piece of good fortune in knowing him. At the entrance of life it was impossible to encounter a guide of better quality and surer step than this right-minded, quick-witted man, a type of truth and honor. The professor was six feet high, and his pale cheeks were hung with a long black beard. Two eyes at once soft and sharp, snapping at the bottom of their orbits encircled with a bistre tint, lighted up this original head. Père Duhousset,

as they called him, was a leangiant, a somewhat stooping giant, and a giant who inclined his head over one shoulder.

With all this he had herculean strength and a patience that was an impenetrable armor. He needed it with his present

pupil; the intractable scholar gave him a never-ending task. However,

when the obstinate fit was on, and everybody had to renounce the attempt of making him listen to

reason, père Duhousset had found a memorable punishment. At the

lower end of the garden there was being excavated just then a well,

of no great depth. Using the tenderest precautions, and wearing

a Rhadamanthine face, he took possession of his pupil and lowered

him softly to his ensilage. It must be confessed that this method had

little effect, and that père Duhousset was soon obliged to give it up.

"You have gone a little too far" said the rebel without the least emotion. "You will have to run for a ladder to get me out of this".

And truly, seeing no other solution, père Duhousset went after the ladder.

Soon Charles Delort quitted this beloved professor who, in his opinion, insisted too much on the necessity of entering the military school of Saint-Cyr. He installed himself at Paris. Thanks to the recommendation of



Gérôme, who was a family friend, he entered the studio of Gleyre. Comprehending at a very early stage that a natural facility with the crayon is not enough to make a veritable painter, he betook himself conscientiously, continuously and ardently to the pickaxe work of art. He was eighteen, and that is an age at which one can amuse oneself while working.

Under Gleyre — to whom Gustave Planche, certainly no prodigal with

his eulogiums, admitted a vigorous coloring, purity of design and naturalness of movement, — he made rapid progress. In what studio could he find a better set of qualities to form himself upon! It was in this studio also, without doubt, that the brilliant pupil acquired those warm, refined, yet vigorous octaves of color which we are to find at a later period in all his works.

A fortunate occasion for travelling now presented itself. In 1862, Gérôme sailed for Egypt, and Charles Delort embarked with him. Egypt, with its variegated populace, its palms and its sky, the sands, and the ruins heaped along the river, is a veritable Canaan for the painter. Under the direction

of his new professor, the artist continued there, in the open air, a series of important studies.

Coming back to Paris, he competed for the Prize of Rome. His preliminary drawings were so highly numbered that he entered as second into the *loge* or chamber where the essay for examination is in solitude prepared. But his painting-study had not been carried far enough to let him hope for a prize in competition with such rivals for the Prize of Rome as were

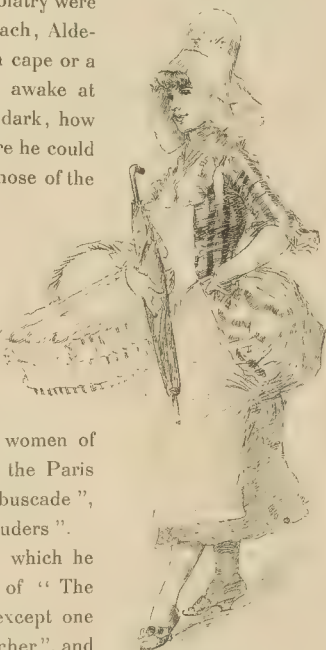


Leloir, Paul Laurens, Henri Lévy, etc. About 1872, if you went in quest of Delort, you found him installed, — but always temporarily! — at Marlotte. Here, if you surprised him in his studio, you might find him occupied, between two hunting expeditions, in cutting up breadths of leather, satin or velvet. He cut his costumes himself, declaring, rightly enough, that no workman could succeed in giving them the character of their epoch.

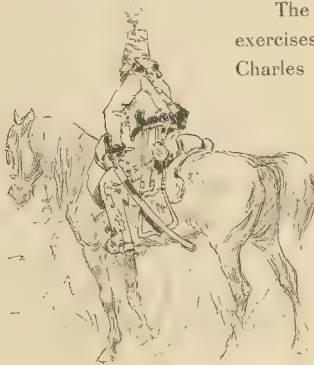
At that period the gods of his idolatry were Holbein, Albert Dürer, Lucas Cranach, Aldegrever, Quentin Metzys. The cut of a cape or a pair of trunk-hose would keep him awake at night. How many fumbings in the dark, how many tryings-on, were necessary before he could provide uniforms for his models like those of the landsknechts of his favorite masters!

Tying up his dogs and leaving the chase, he journeyed over Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland, to study the painters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries at home. Coming back from these tours, dreaming only of his landsknechts and their slashed leather doublets, or of the dreamy women of mystical Germany, he presented at the Paris Salons of 1872 and 1873, "The Ambuscade", "The Confidence", and "The Marauders".

Since the Exposition of 1875, at which he obtained a medal for his picture of "The Embarcation of Manon Lescaut", except one modern subject, "The arrest of a Poacher", and the "Capture of the Dutch Fleet by the Revolutionary Army", he appears to have devoted himself to the eighteenth century; and especially to the woman-ingredient of that epoch of elegance, swift wit, and easy manners. Without denying his former idols of the Flemish school, he is found burning incense at the feet of Chardin and Latour, — often even at those of Fragonard and Watteau. Watteau's "Voyage to Cythera" makes him partly forget the severe Holbein. A lace cap of the Louis XV period, found



after endless researches, now procures him the same emotions as he felt formerly before a fine set of armor of the maximilian period. The simplest, most vulgar, household utensils, alongside the richest fabrics, provided that all be purest Louis XV, are heaped in his delightful little house in the rue d'Offémont, as formerly the helmets, the corselets, the rapiers and the battle-axes in his house at Marlotte.



The medium in which he lives sometimes exercises a sensible influence on the painting of Charles Delort. After a short sojourn with the twenty-third dragoons, with whom he had been named sub-lieutenant of the reserve, he was found, as a painter, transformed into a full military artist. It was as a sequel to this experience that he exhibited "The capture of the Dutch Fleet by the Hussars of the Republic", the picture which was worth a second medal for him in 1882.

And just before, he painted "The Sermon", in which it is a lieutenant of chasseurs who is receiving a severe admonition from a holy father — a little genre picture. For this military personage, supposed to be the nephew of the reverend canon, the artist chose one of his studies of the mess-table — a dissipated looking officer, whose thinned locks at an early age give the idea of a hard

liver. Having established the effect of his surroundings upon the choice of subject usual with Delort, I will return for a moment to the influences of his home and family during the commencement of his career.

His father, who died in 1846, was a man remarkable for his ability in conducting grand enterprises; was director of the Paris-Lyons-Mediterranean railroad, and also of the mining affair of the Grand-Combe, and his decease left an important fortune to his widow and children. Charles, a spoiled child if ever there was one, was kept under the charge and guardianship of his

mother, an American lady from New-York, born of French creole parents of the island of Santo-Domingo. It was a very gentle charge and a very indulgent guardianship, which nowise hindered either his pastimes or his imagination. The competency which her husband bequeathed her sufficed to the mother for the satisfaction of her idolized children's tastes. Thus Charles Delort was brought up with American liberty, and more than the others profited by that schooling of independence and freedom.



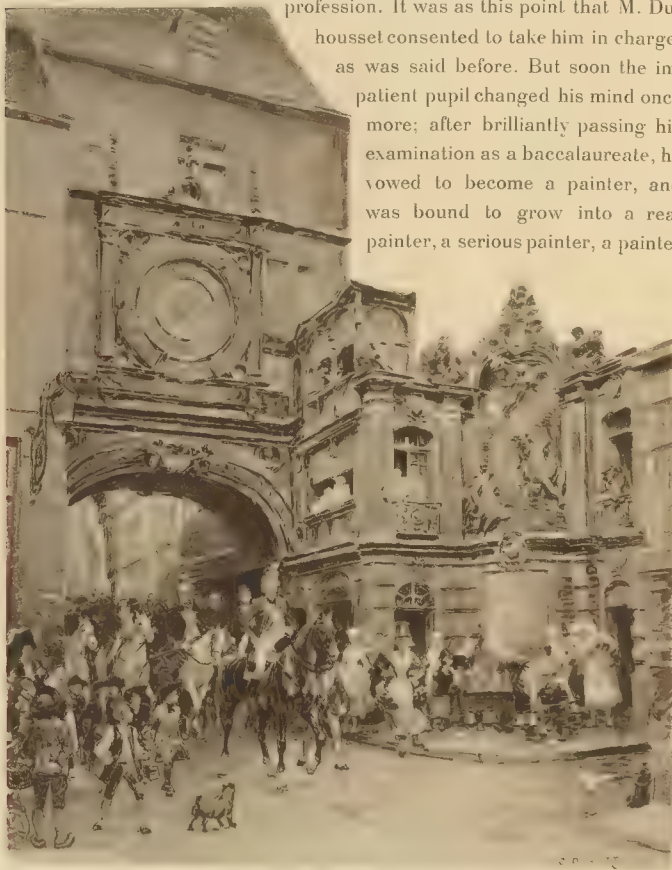
His earlier childhood was passed in the country, in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux. Here, as the result of incessant exercise, his strength and agility developed in surprising fashion. He became, what he has remained, strong, agile, and hardy, and above all a lover of every kind of sport.

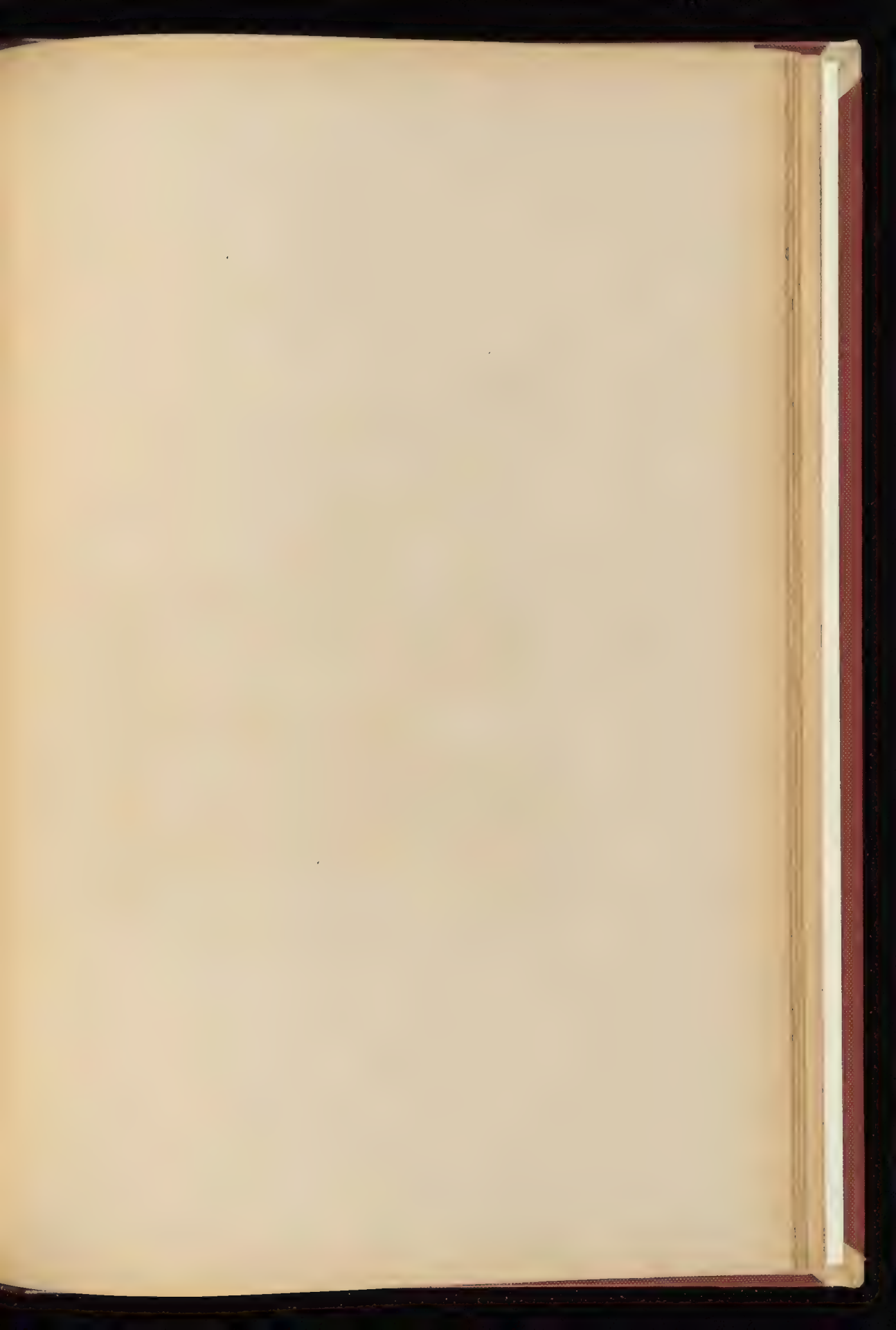
At twelve years of age, finding rural life a little monotonous, notwithstanding his rides across country, his stalking tours, and his gymnastics, he declared to his mother, who has never ventured to contradict him, that he wished to enter the Naval Academy. Long voyages and mighty discoveries, well peppered with adventure, such was the life of his dreams. He seemed perfectly fitted for it. With strong nerves, untamable energy, and an enviable state of health, he could endure the most enormous fatigues. He was accordingly placed as boarder in the naval college at Lorient, one of the best special schools in France. But the vexations of discipline, the technical study, the confinement, the endless tasks, were hardly a regimen suited to the expansion of this nature born

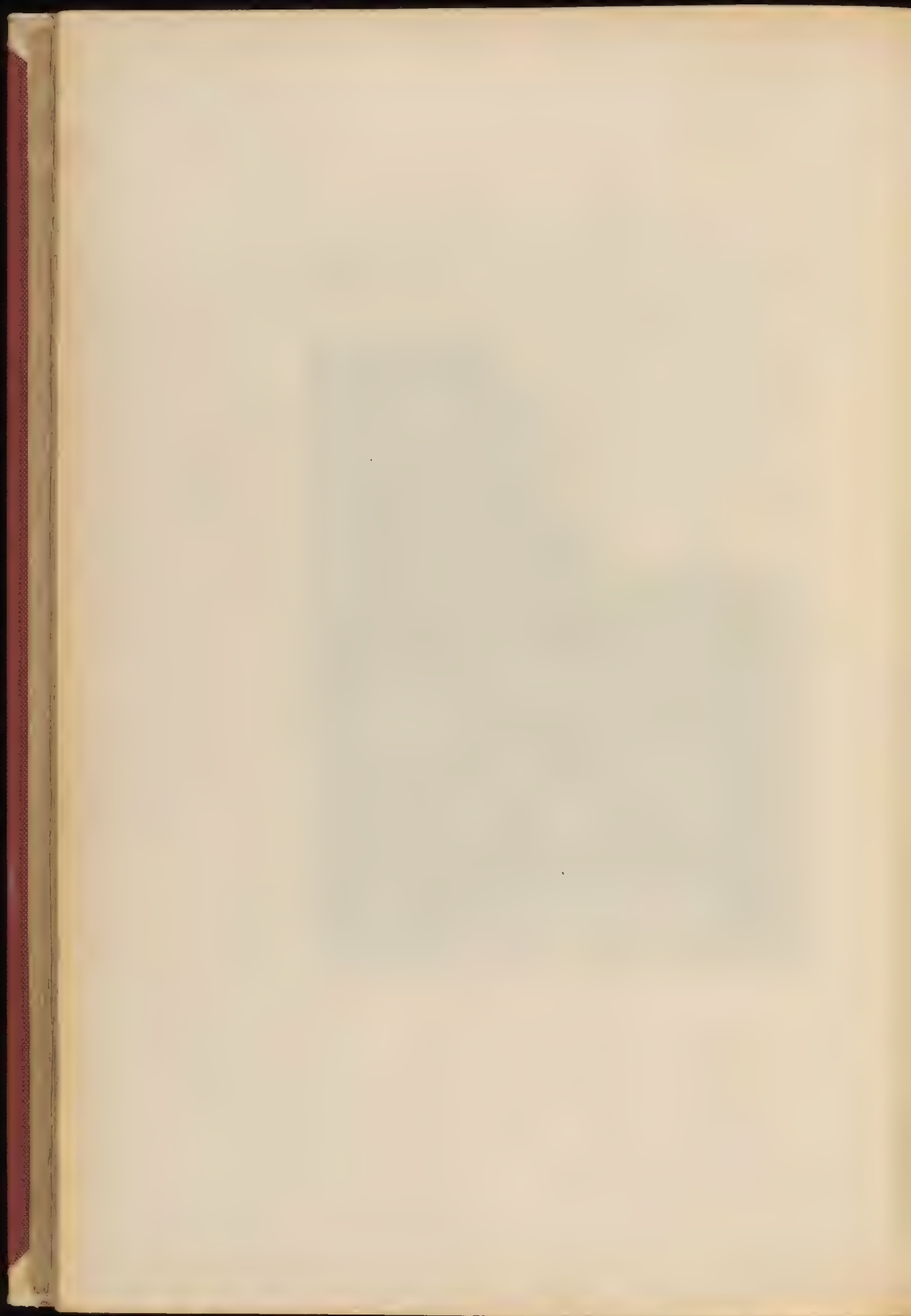


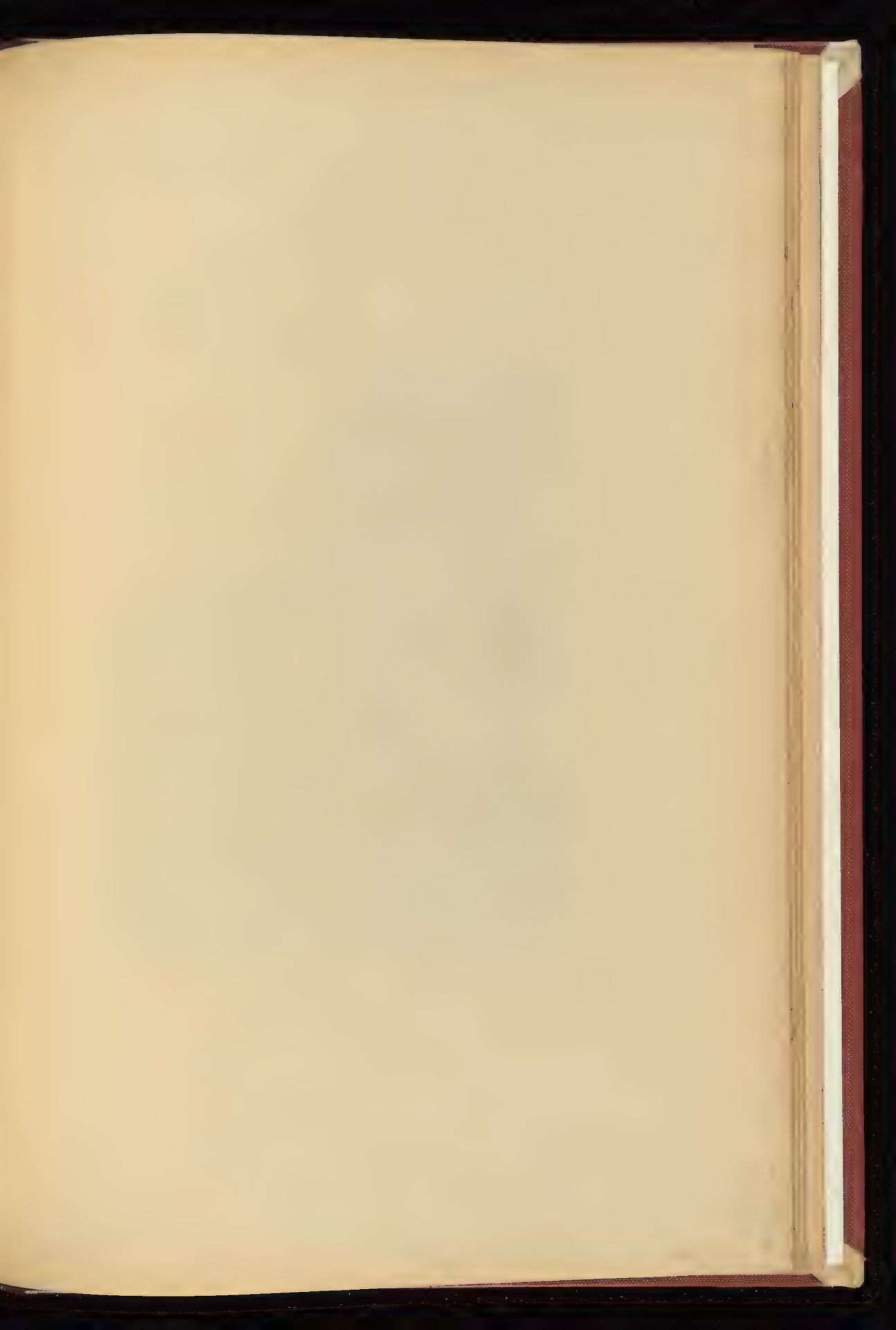
to please the world, to taste the education of pleasure, and to criticise modern life with ardor and eagerness. It was not for such a lad to pursue an endless course in a preparatory school. A piece of unjust treatment made him leave the Lorient college, at the time of life when his young ideal was changing from the imprisoned state of a naval officer to that of the military

profession. It was at this point that M. Du-
housset consented to take him in charge,
as was said before. But soon the im-
patient pupil changed his mind once
more; after brilliantly passing his
examination as a baccalaureate, he
vowed to become a painter, and
was bound to grow into a real
painter, a serious painter, a painter



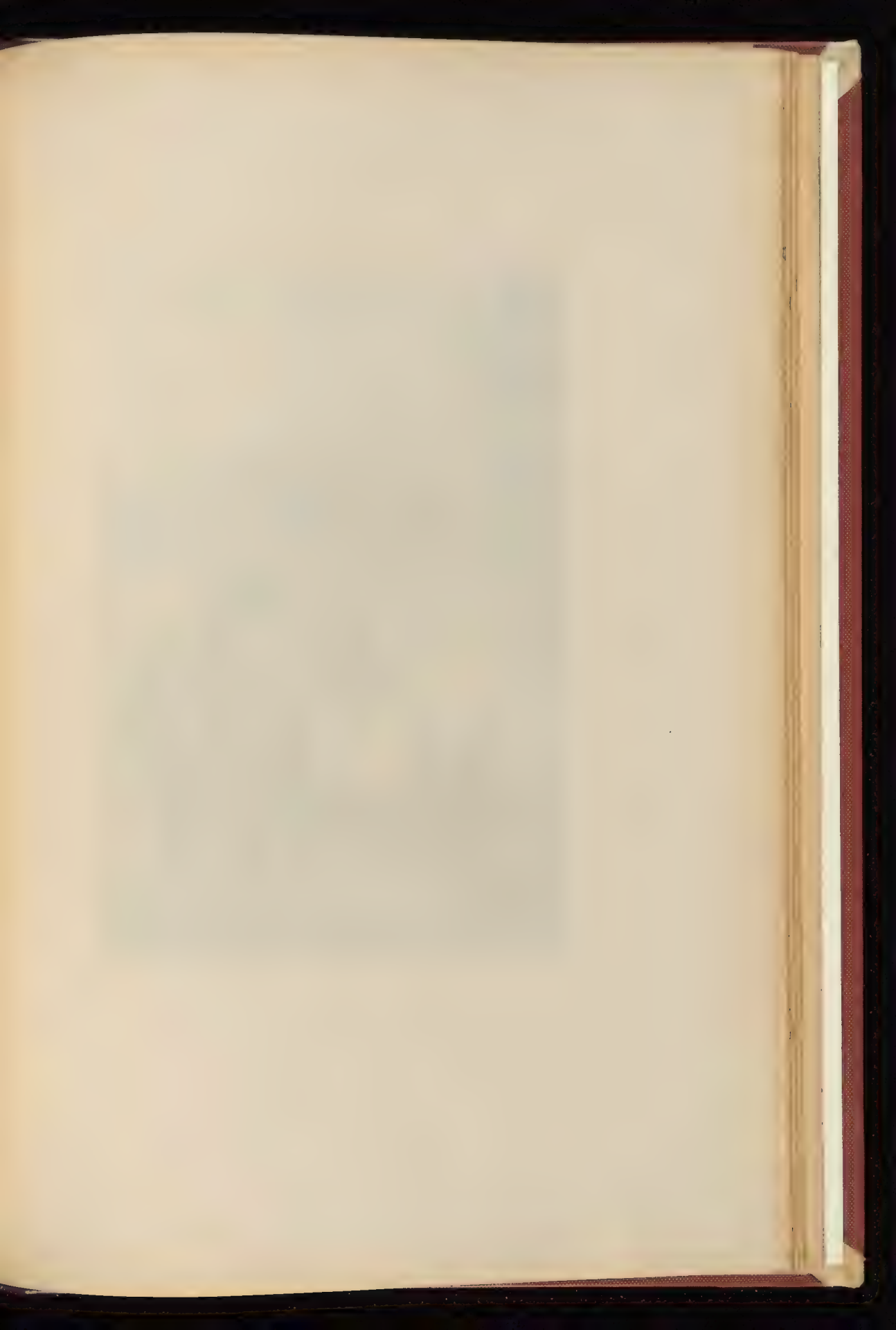


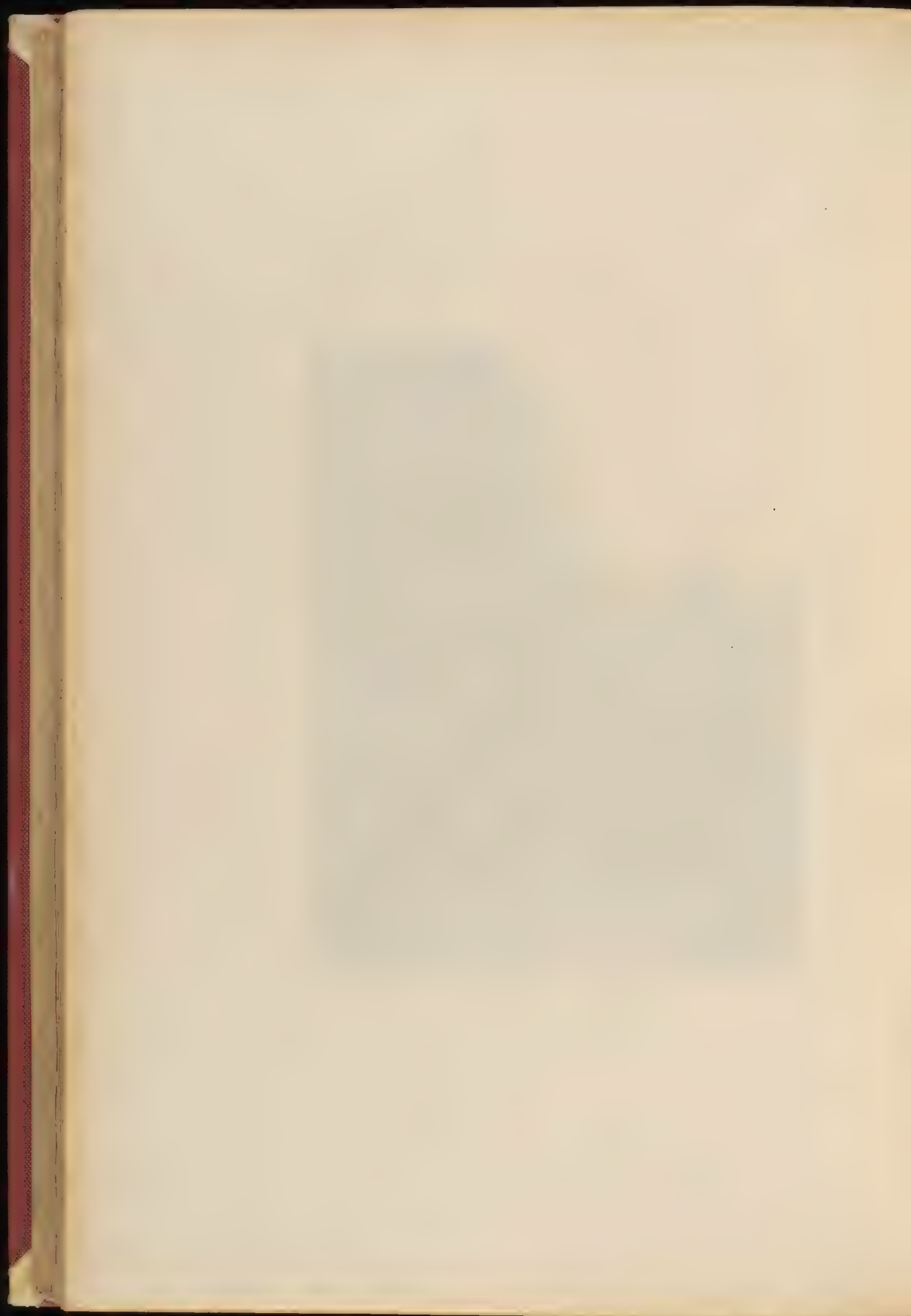




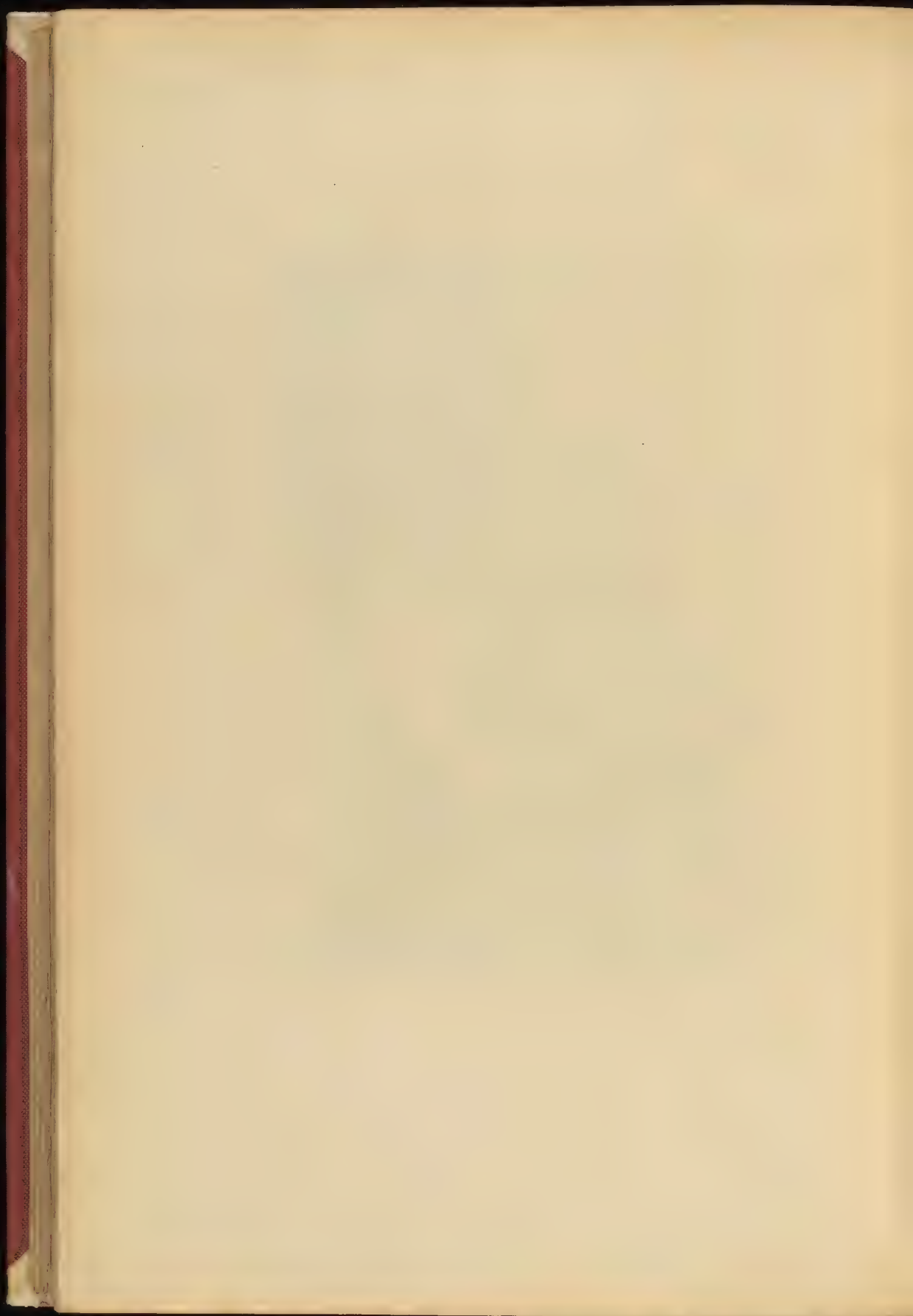


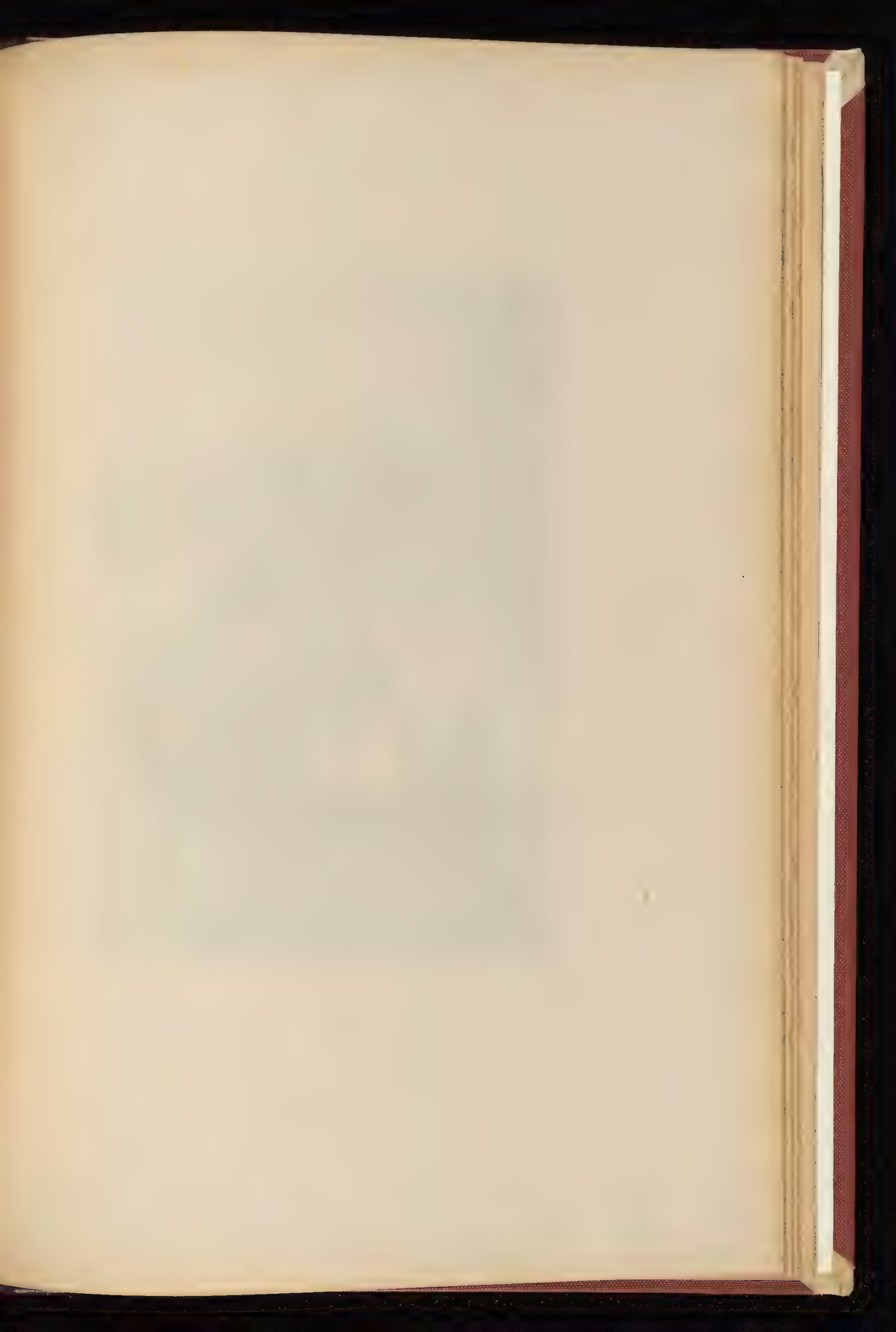
C. DAVIES

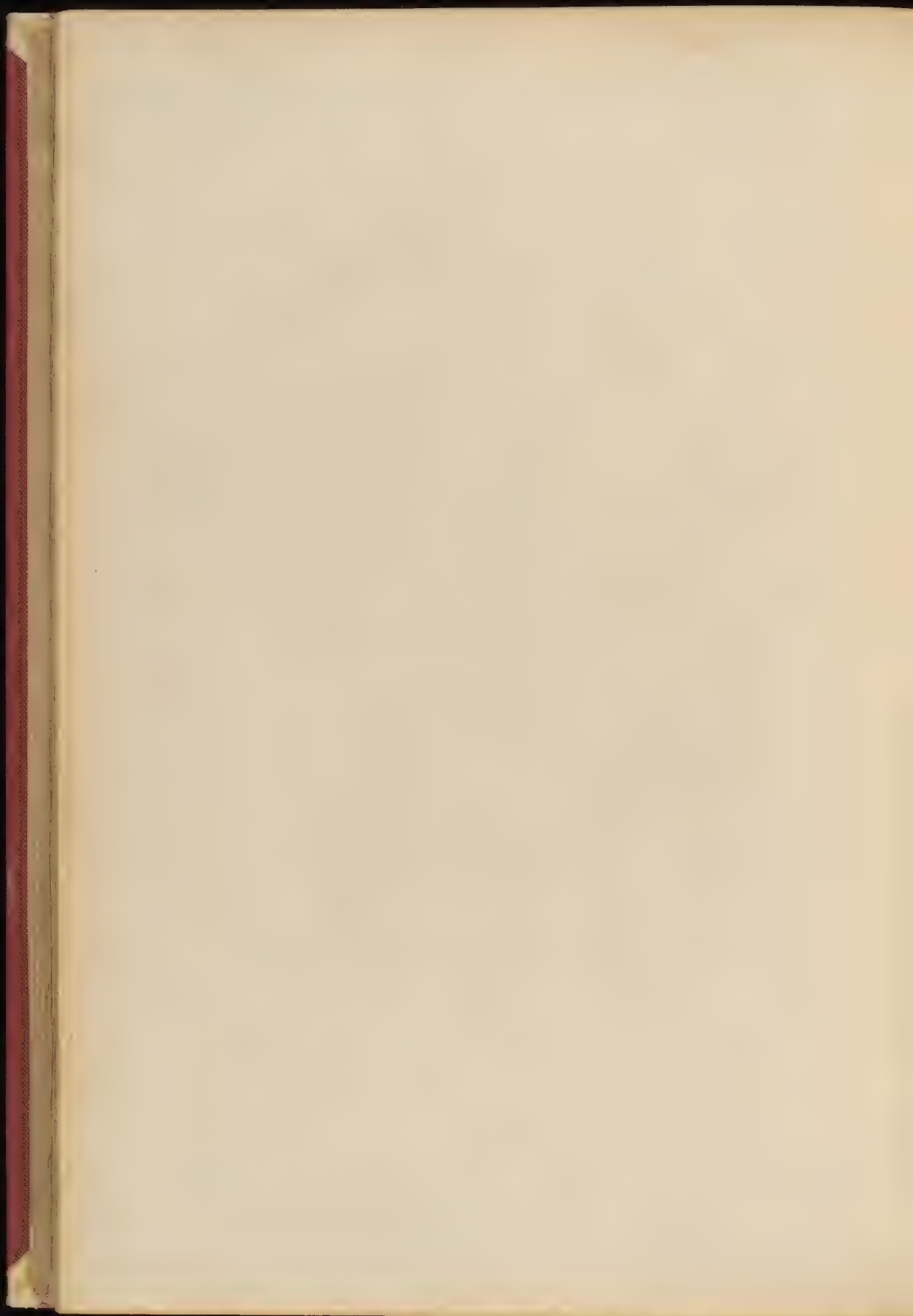














justly popular and yet worthy of serious criticism, and this against all the strength of wind and tide.

Of the child enlarged into a man, the character has changed in naught from the effects of age. These high fantasies are the essential character of Charles Delort.

At present, he shows a medium height, his shoulders are broad, without heaviness or thickness, he has a little of the roundness of back common among gymnasts, and is rather muscular than stout. The head, of small size, beams with intelligence. The eye, ordinarily covered with an eyeglass, is alternately mild and brilliant. The keen nose, the wide awake nostrils, the mouth a little retreating and the chin a little prominent, recall the profiles on certain Roman medals. Long before the proper time, his active life has powdered his locks smartly with gray. The locks are worn short over the forehead, rather longer and turned back at the temples; the moustache twisted upwards, a good deal of self confidence in the gesture, and a toilet always correct, give him the air of a cavalry officer in civilian dress. During the war, in the mounted national guard, he did heavy duty, and at Buzenval was actively concerned in the engagement during the entire day. Withal, his apprenticeship among the dragoons has left with him a violent taste for military matters.

So much for the physical. His character is one which makes him beloved by all around him, and by all who approach him. He remains the friend of de Neuville, his former college chum at Lorient, and the not less intimate comrade of Leloir, who was his rival in the cells when competing for the Prize of Rome. Every one who rubs against him in every-day life appreciates and esteems him. In the ranks of the artists he knows naught but the kindest sympathy.



Let us remark in passing, how common and numerous — notwithstanding the proverb of the common-place people and the Philistines and the cheap censors of Bohemia, — are these affections between artists, these really brotherly friendships, innocent of jealousy or envy. They are as steady as they are enduring. Charles Delort has been able to form a numerous



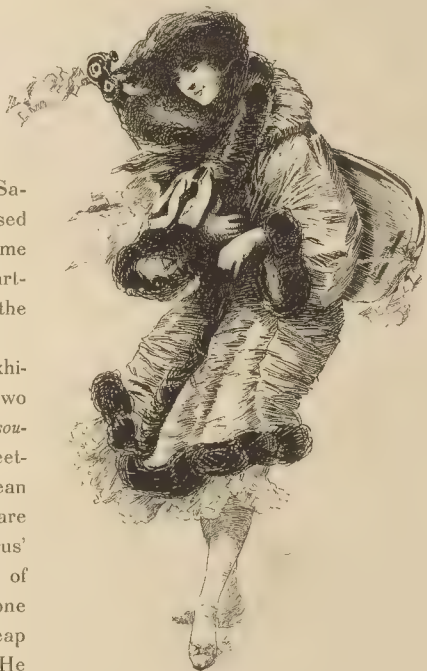
group around himself; he repays with usury the attachment of his circle. When one knows him, and knows him well, it is impossible not to feel drawn towards him. Quick, prompt, may-be a little brusque, and ever rather apt to amuse himself at your expense — how could it be otherwise, in a Southerner, born at Nîmes, and carrying in his veins the hot and ardent creole blood? — you need at least have no fear that, although born beside the great Roman circus of Nîmes, he preserves the least taint of the objectionable southern accent. It is impossible to be a better companion than he, with his goodness and cordiality, his devoted and reliable friendliness. His heart is pure as gold and he carries it in his hand.

But now we should return to his professional career as it passes before us in military review. From his retreat at Marlotte we got his picture of "Daphnis and Chloe" the first which individualized him in the public attention. He had fixed himself there for study, in the first place, but with large views of hunting in the intervals of labor; renting a hunting-right in the Fontainebleau forest, and possessing a little pack of dogs, he stalked, or rode with the hounds, while every day digging away faithfully at Art. "Daphnis and Chloe", that original and appealing picture, made a sensation in the Salon of 1866. Under a sky of the Levant, by the side of the ocean, Chloe is anxiously breathing on her flute.

In the distance, over the blue wavelets, leans the sail of the pirates who have carried away the cattle of Daphnis and that unlucky shepherd himself. At the well-known sounds of the reed, the oxen betake themselves to swimming, and bring back Daphnis to his betrothed. Happy composition, with easy drawing and exquisite color, all is successful in this fortunate and excellent work. It placed Charles Delort properly in relief and gave him a rank from the moment of his starting. This beginning was noticed and commented on by the famous critics. Paul de Saint-Victor and Théophile Gautier did not grudge him their praises nor their encouragements. At the following Salons, the genre pictures he exposed maintained him at the same height. And collectors and art-merchants learned the road to the studio at Marlotte.

After the war, in 1872, he exhibited "The Ambuscade". Two swashbucklers, two German *soudards*, are seen waiting at a street-corner for the traveller they mean to murder and strip. Here we are already far away from Longus' pastoral. But in the career of Charles Delort we pass from one sentiment to another, and leap over immense epochs of time. He is not one to stick to the wall of his special corner. Above everything an eclectic, he passes easily from wit to austerity, from sadness to merriment, from the gloomiest drama to the most lightsome and arch buffo.

And now we are arrived at one of the capital pages of the book. The "Embarcation of Manon Lescaut for Louisiana" was exhibited in 1875. The wretched Manon, in a boat shaken by heavy waves, is surrounded with sol-



diers and being taken to a grand warship with the high poop of the time of Louis XV, whose lofty antique sterncastle is loaded with carved ornament. In the composition of this scene the artist puts forth all his talent and brilliancy. The expressions of the personages, the details and the whole movement, with the liveliness of the coloring, all strike at once in this remarkable concord, where the effects of light are rendered with specially delicate art. The picture now belongs to Mr. Lefebvre, and forms a part of the gallery of the really princely château of Chamant.

In 1876, "Wedding feast in the Park". In 1878, "In at the Death in a Market Place"; a ten-pronged stag is cornered, with the hounds and hunters all down upon him, right in the midst of a village market, with astonished herb-women and apple-women in costumes of the Louis XV period. In 1879, "Poachers". In 1882, "Capture of the Dutch Feet".



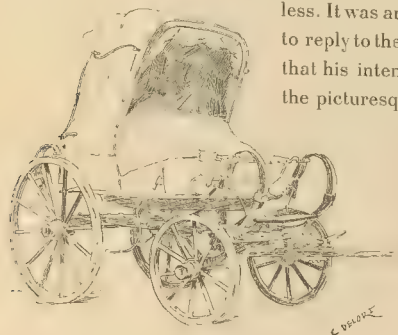
Before having been exhibited, and before having left the studio, the "Capture of the Dutch Fleet" gave rise to discussions between the French



and Dutch military papers. Legend, speaking by the engravings and sketches of the epoch, always showed Moreau's hussars charging, at full gallop and sabre in hand, over the ice, upon the impassive walls of oak stricken with powerlessness and immobility. Thus represented, the fable was agreeable to French prowess, which found a brilliant example in this combat, so fantastic and so completely unique in history. An officer from Holland, doubtless

feeling sure that Delort must have paid homage to the fiction and represented cavalry flying and sliding with loose rein over a mirror, disputed the correctness of the fact historically speaking, relying on documents drawn from

the archives of his nation. The commander of the fleet had orders to yield without offering a blow to the French army, and had no idea of imperilling uselessly the lives of his men in a defence that was physically hopeless. It was an easy matter for Charles Delort to reply to the letter published by the *Figaro*, that his intention was restricted to rendering the picturesque nature of the situation.



The hussar detachment is in fact drawn up, and waiting. In this picture, composed with every care and with a conscientious search for truth in its most extreme minutiae, there is neither combat nor attack. It is

simply a boarding of the immense fortresses, the frigates made prisoners by the cold and fatally doomed to the invasion. Among the cavalry, some have dismounted upon the ice, and one adjusts his girth of his horse. The others sit their horses, musketoon on thigh and sabre in furrow. In the middle distance the commander of the fleet renders his sword to Commandant Lahure, who leads the French detachment. The red sun is setting at the horizon, in a streak of purple, lighting up this scene with striking effect. It is quite evident that if the Holland officer who tried conclusions with Charles Delort had only seen the picture, he would have abstained from all commentary and all criticism. The artist's researches, his sketches on the Texel, and the documents he consulted, leave no doubt as to the exact fashion in which he has traced the scene. It is clear that the fact must have thus occurred. Have we any need to add that the "Capture of the Dutch Fleet" was a grand and legitimate success in the Salon of 1882?

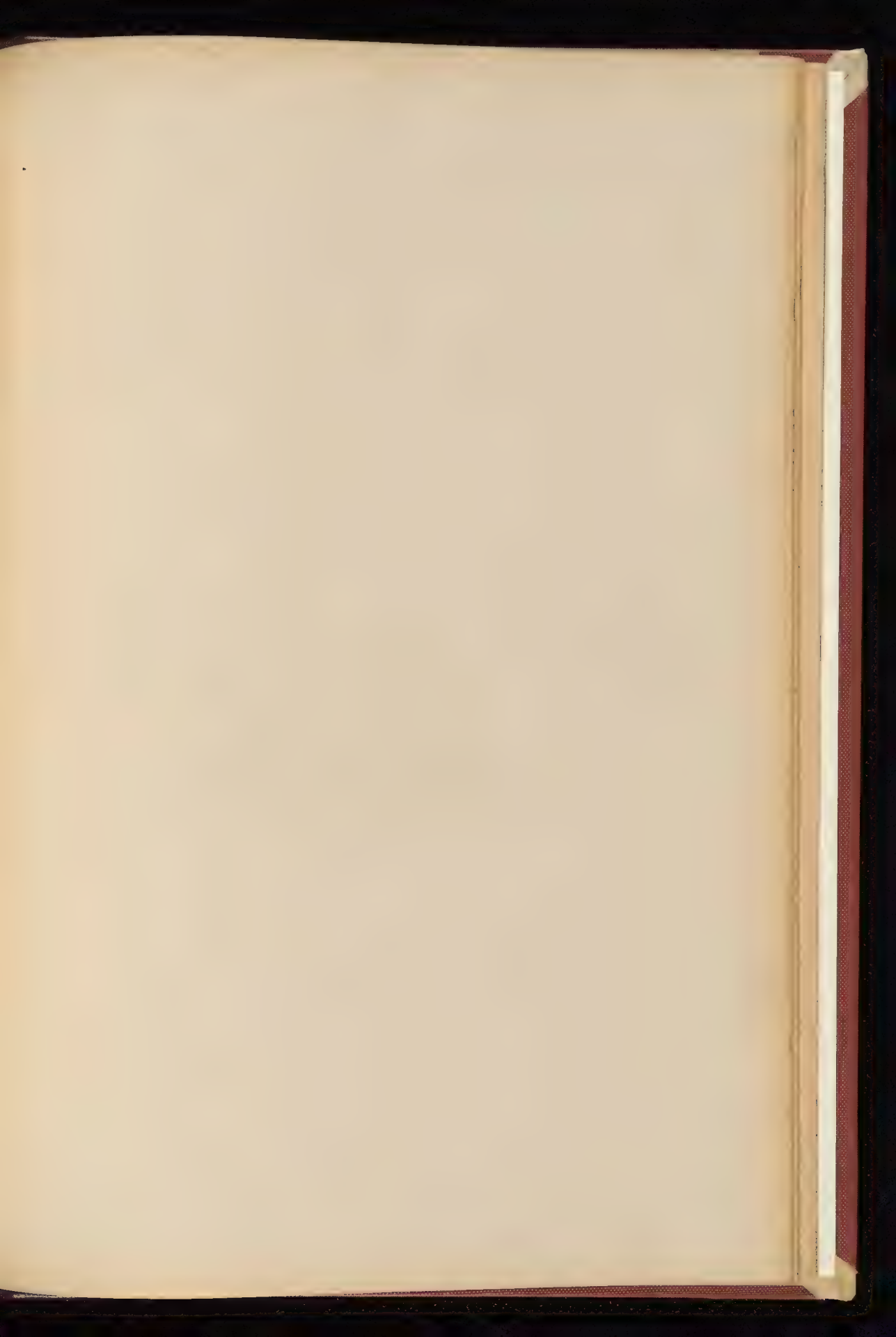


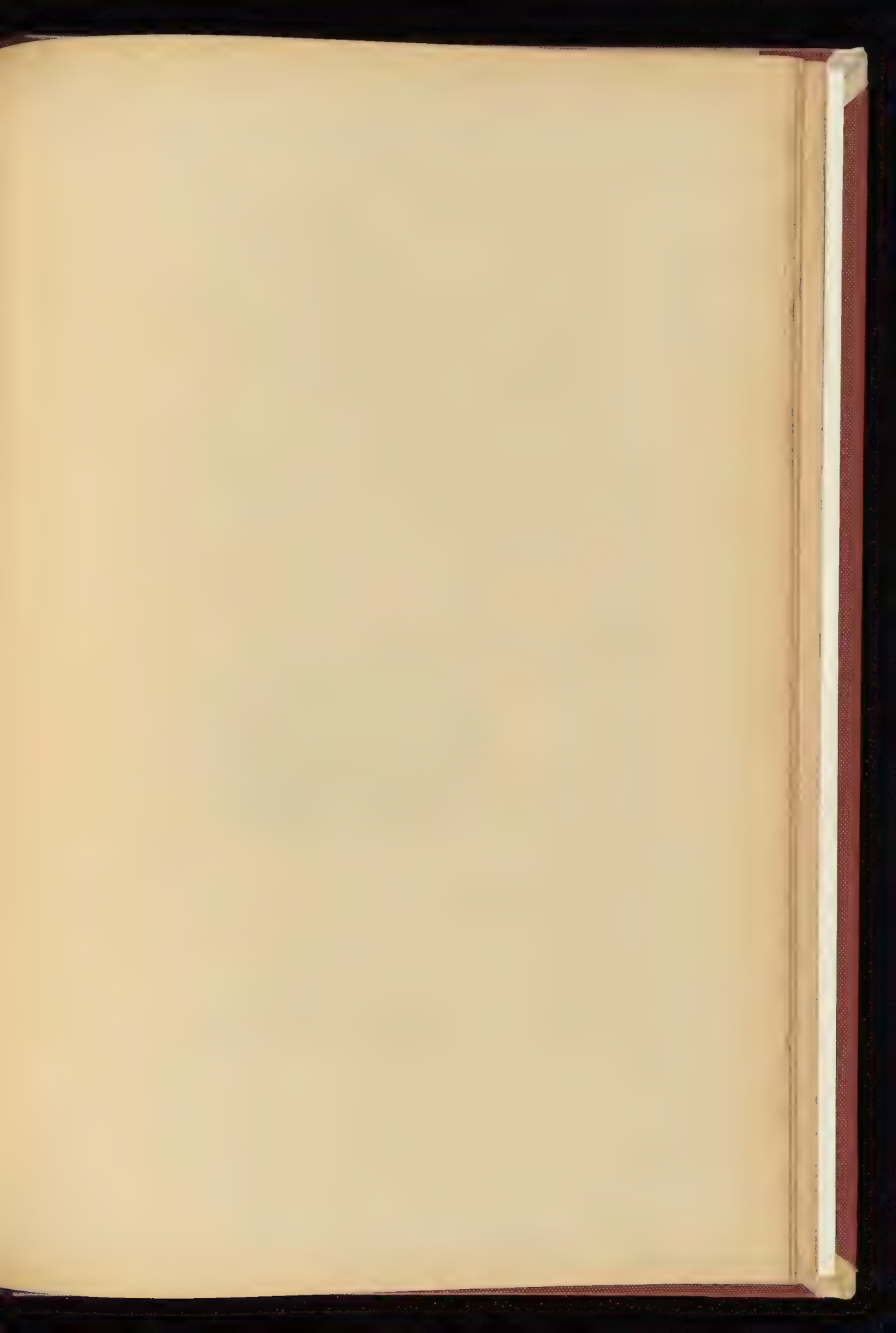
As Aquarellist, Charles Delort does not belong to the school which maintains the purity of water-color method. Color deposited by a single

wash, and whites saved out and worked around, are to him a matter of sovereign indifference and contempt. Provided he can get at what he wants in the way of firmness of design, precision of modelling, vivacity in the color, it is of slight importance to him what has been the means. He will load on body-color, he will use impasto, he will lay wash over wash, he will scratch out — every road is good which leads to his result. Nor is he the only one who proceeds thus. Those are numerous who reject the narrow commandments and skimmed and confined rules of the old routine. We are far from the time when aquarelle passed for a kind of art enslaved to invariable laws. To-day, thank heaven, and for some time back, — even before Decamps and Bonington, our artists have arrived at an aquarelle having vivacity and intensity of color yet able still to rival the solid qualities of oil. This is the aim of our friend when he paints in water-color.

GEORGES PRADEL.





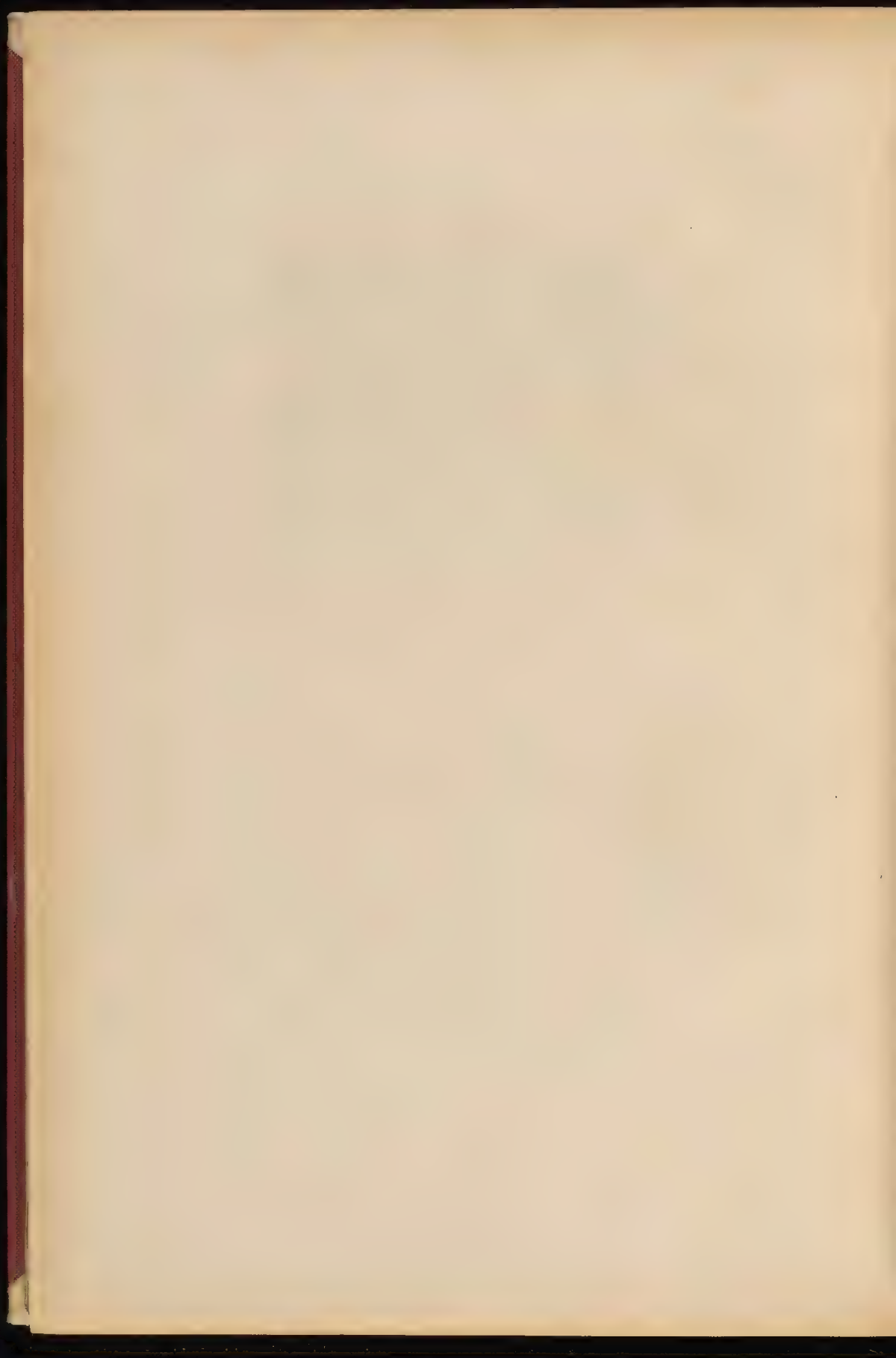














JAMES TISSOT



A noticeable section of our connoisseurs and even of our arts-critics were greatly surprised on learning that the Society of French Aquarellists had admitted James Tissot among the number of its members. What, this delightful painter of English manners, this acute analyst of the bodily peculiarities or graces of the British lady was he then a Frenchman? For ourselves, who can now count on our sleeve several chevrons of critical rank—without boasting, for every one knows that since Napoleon I chevrons are not a mark of genius—it would have been shameful not to be aware that the newly elected member belonged to our French nation by his birth and education, and, I may add, by his earlier triumphs. One must be very young not to have heard

the report of the part played by this artist in our yearly Salons from 1859 to 1870.

James Tissot was born at Nantes the 15th of October 1836. He descends from an old family of the frontiers of the Jura. His father, who lives at

Buillon, a former abbey near Besançon, is the owner of a fine fortune : he is an amateur, one of a peculiar kind, common enough in the provinces ; he is a conchologist. His mania, exclusive like all manias, has left him no room for tenderness towards the fine arts. His son has never had any success in his eyes.



The college of Brugelette, then that of Vannes, had the task of initiating young Tissot in the sciences which form the commonplaces of general education. It was not necessary to repress his ardor for study ; the hobbyhorse of art was already galloping before the eyes of the lad, and prevented him from finding too many classical beauties in the *De Viris*. A letter lately addressed to me by the artist, reveals this fact, with a pleasant modesty : " I do not think there was ever such a lazybones as I " he writes me in this letter. " I am one of those rare specimens of pupils who had to pass three times through the examination for the third class. But on the other hand my desk was a perfect museum. Every thing was to be seen there, drawings, sculpture, architecture ; a

gothic belfry in wood, with an octagonal dome, a spire, bell-turrets, etc. "

As a historian anxious to prove one time more the facts derivable from things, I seize this manifestation of the painter's precocious fondness for the gothic. It is known how constantly the love of archaic subjects was to haunt him during the earlier years of his career. Baron Leys was to be the powder-spark that should fire in the young man's heart that passion

for antique toys which we find already warming in the schoolboy on his bench.

It seems probable that James Tissot had no great trouble in overcoming the objections of his father, for we find him once more at the age of twenty quietly sitting before an easel in the studio of Lamothe, at Paris. Lamothe? We hardly know where to look for Lamothe to-day. Assuredly he was a bad painter. True, he had received the instructions of Ingres, and perhaps he was wise enough to hand them on to others. The first trials of Tissot were accordingly in the style of Ingres; but his faith in this doctrine was unstable. As a consequence of a visit paid to Leys, in 1859, he became a convert to archaism, and was known as one of the most fervent apostles of the newly-invented doctrine; Antwerp had been his road to Damascus.

Dating from this epoch, James Tissot counts in the annals of painting. He is hotly criticised; therefore he exists.

The portrait of his mother was the first thing he exhibited. His entrance into the lists is thus marked by an act of filial piety such as artists are accustomed to evince, and which in fact we find almost universal. Is it not the usage, in fact, among the young students of the liberal sciences, to inscribe at the head of those themes which consecrate them as graduates, the cherished



names of forefathers and protectors, — the names of those, in fact, to whom they owe everything and from whom they hope still more?

Notwithstanding its high merit, the work of James Tissot is little known in France; we may be permitted to recall briefly those among his paintings which have occupied the public attention at the Paris Salon from 1859 to 1870. For many a reader it will be the means of awakening, more

vividly than any criticisms would do, recollections dulled by time but which certainly deserve to escape oblivion.

In 1859, James Tissot exhibited a pair of paintings in the wax method, "St. James the Greater and St. Bernard," and "St. Marcel and St. Oliver." The critics of the day were struck with "the delicate expression of the heads" to be observed in these pictures; they considered



that the youthful artist did honor to his teacher Flandrin—for in fact this important name figured as the young beginner's chaperon in the catalogue of 1859, though in succeeding catalogues James Tissot always gave himself out as pupil of Mr. L. Lamothe only; we are therefore induced to suppose that the part played by Flandrin in our painter's training was very inconsiderable.

Along with the two sacred subjects whose titles we have given, figured a little canvas whose conception and treatment recalled the visit made that same year

to the Antwerp painter, Leys. Our friend Paul Mantz points out in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* the amusing archaism of the "Promenade in the Snow," and offers his compliments to the author—whom he calls M. *Jacobus* Tissot, doubtless guided by the desire to give a name full of local color to this pundit's work, to this picture ending in *us*. I have never seen the birth-register of Tissot: his name should be that of James,

which he always bears; at any rate he has not adopted it in homage to the English, for we know it as his as long as he has worked at painting, that is to say ten years prior to his departure for Great Britain.



In 1860, the gallery of Mr. Goupil, in the rue Chaptal, exhibited successfully the "Margaret in Church", which remains one of the best canvases of Tissot. This painting is of free and vigorous style, though most patiently carried out in the details. The reproach which might then be addressed to the painter, and which has often been made since then, was in fact an excess of sincerity which led him to omit nothing. His art, like the art of the primitive masters, forbade all the omissions and the wilful negligence from which most of the grand painters have been able to deduce their best plan of action. Tissot's way of seeing things is a way as good as another; we will not

discuss it, we will accept it with a good grace, although our personal taste leads us to rank ourselves beside the masters of "comprehensive" painting, that is to say possessed of all the means of working, even including

the feats of address. Apropos of the "Marguerite" and the pictures which followed it, the world did not omit to cry out "copy-work" and "pasticcio". The imitation of the early Dutch masters and of their modern resurrectionist Leys, was obvious. Nevertheless the bitterest critics could not help recognizing that Tissot in all these imitations remained himself:

this fact alone was enough to rank him with the rare artists.



The sharp and individual invention of the painter went on asserting itself more distinctly as time advanced. The archaic fancies called "Faust in the Garden", "Marguerite at Mass", the "Meeting of Faust and Marguerite" (one of the best canvases in the Luxembourg Gallery), and a delicious silhouette of a girl accompanied by this legend, "The Path of Flowers", made a sensation in the Salon of 1861. In these works the painter showed his quality of humor, which was all his own, and the strangeness of the dresses was relieved by a feeling of good taste, the lack of which was now beginning to be felt among contemporary painters. This deficiency is a heavy loss in the works of a majority of our artists, even those most flattered by the public; our painters of costume-subjects dress their models badly and tastelessly, especially when

they choose to grapple with the styles of former times; with all the good will in the world, one cannot find in them the traditions of their predecessors of the eighteenth century, that refined French century when elegance was a commonplace in the artist's studio and the artisan's workshop.

At the Salon of 1863 figured "The Departure", a Venetian scene of the close of the fifteenth century recalling, without imitation, the subjects of Bellini and Carpaccio. It was a canvas very light in tone, of a quiet harmony

notwithstanding its brightness. Also the "Departure of the Affianced"; here it is a German procession; the personages are relieved against a landscape background very skilfully treated and discreetly filling its subordinate part. Finally, the "Return of the Prodigal Son", which collected all the favorable votes of the Paris press, never disposed to spoil Mr. Tissot.

A twofold portrait work, "The Two Sisters", made a lively impression in the Salon of 1864. Criticism was disarmed, and proclaimed ungrudgingly that this was one of the best canvases of the exhibition. An exquisite aroma of candor was exhaled from this charming group of maidens, one full-blown and one in the bud, making a lively spot of color with their spring-like costumes upon a verdant bank of the Seine. The portrait of "Mademoiselle L. L.", in her boudoir before a mirror, had no less success. Evidently the artist had strength enough to free himself from the bonds of archaism. Congratulations poured in upon him from every side, with recommendations to persevere in the new path into which his genius had now entered.

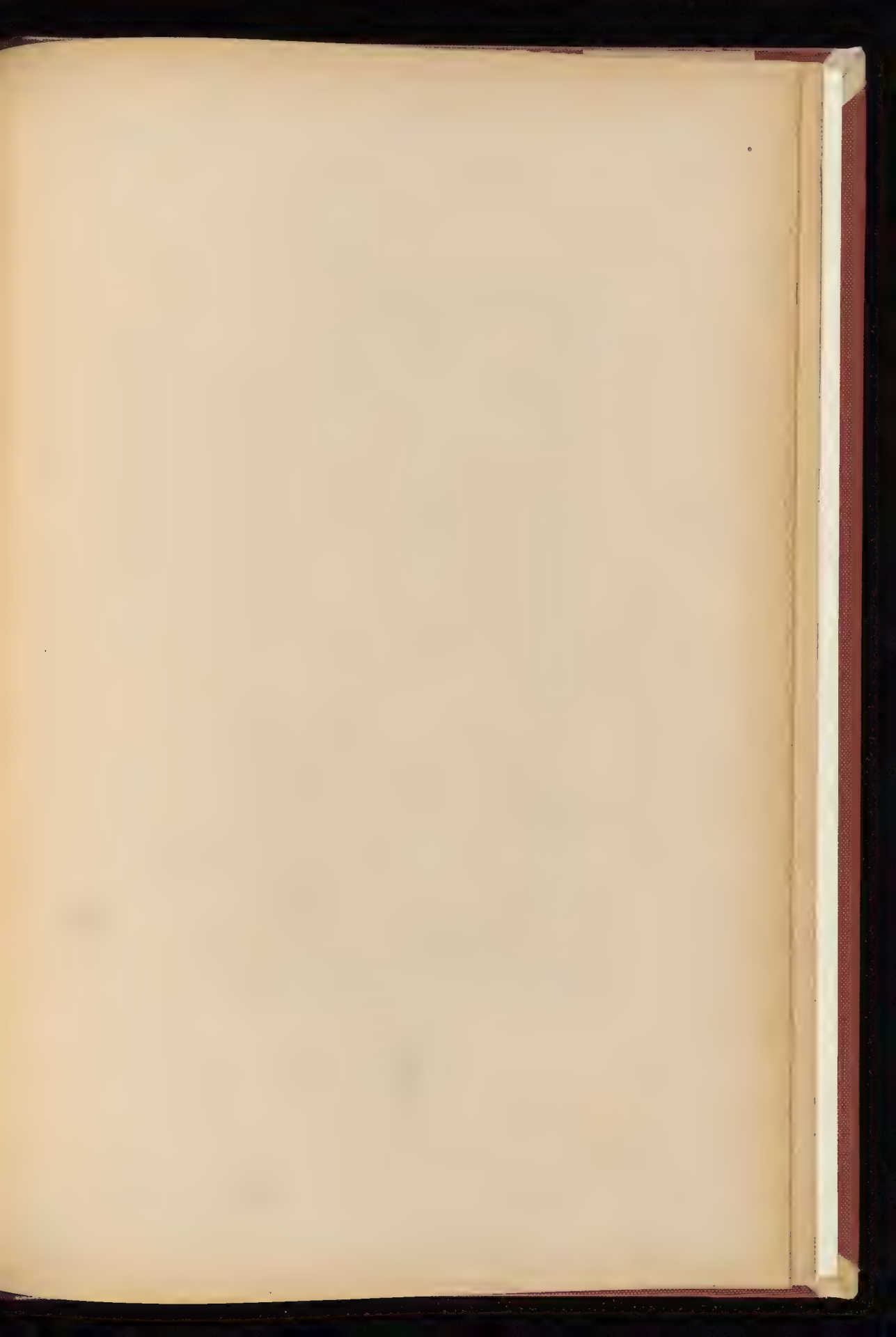
However, James Tissot could not make up his mind to forsake his beloved magazine of curiosities. In 1865 he returned for a moment to his first loves, and from this act of fidelity was born the picture called "The Kidnapping Enterprise", a scene of the sixteenth century, excellently managed, by-the-by. As if he had felt the need to ask pardon for what the misanthropic spirits of the press continually treated like a criminal dereliction, he exhibited in the same Salon another canvas, where the elegant freshness of his talent asserted itself in an undeniable way. On the bank of a rivulet were seen disporting two young ladies and a little girl, living flowers in the midst of the blossoming apple-trees; their vivid and contrasted colors made a pleasant struggle with the skilful shade so admirably regulated by the artist; a kindly struggle, however, not putting the spectator to the risk of being blinded in the splash, as now it too often happens when the impudence of the painter is nothing but a blind for his incompetence. This graceful April nosegay, entitled "Spring", is a French adaptation of certain parallel experiments on the part of the English painter Millais, a painter at one time devoted to pre-Raphaelitism, but who has also had the lucky idea of not committing himself to do resurrectionist's work and nothing else.



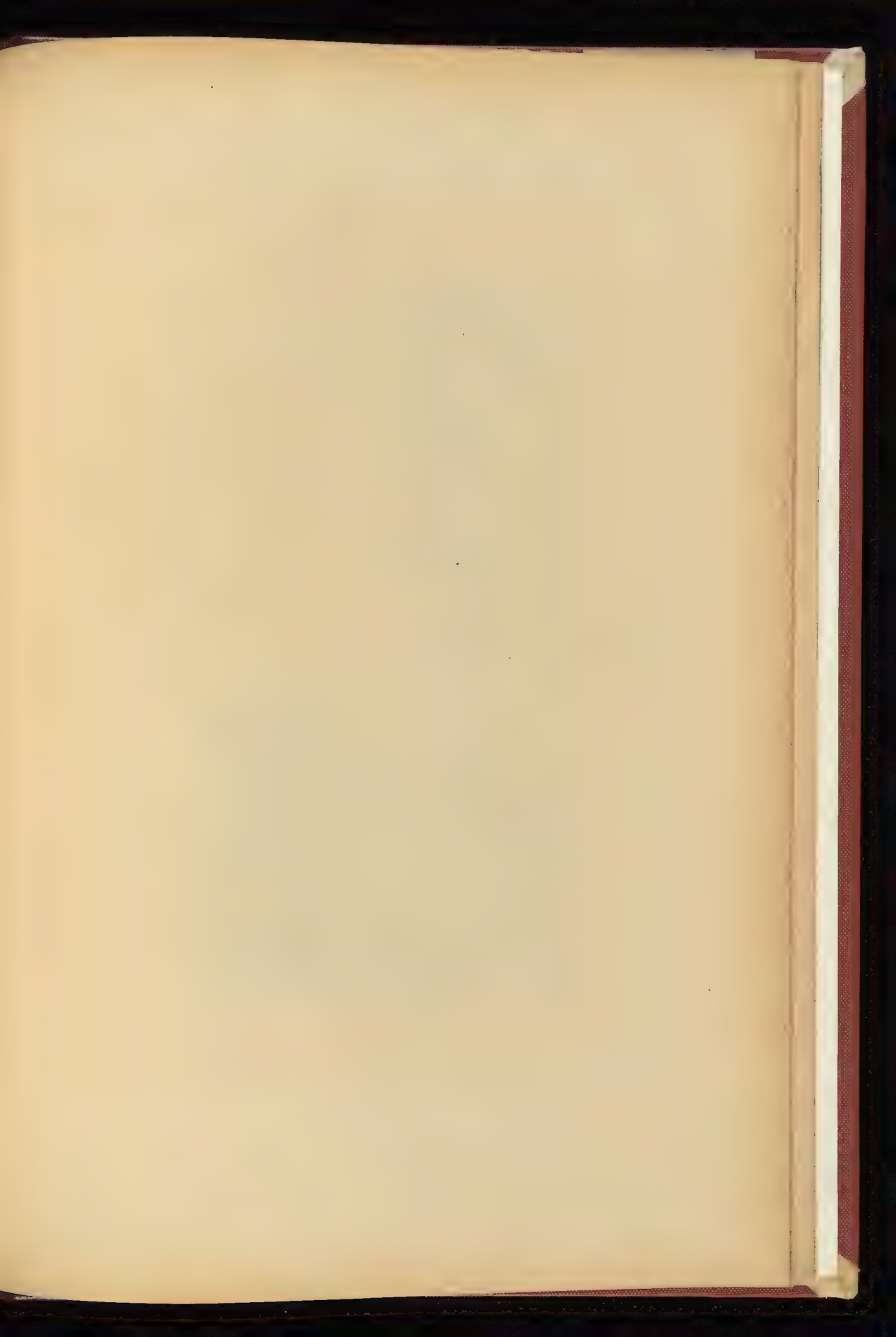
At the Paris Club of the Artistic Union, Tissot exhibited in this same year of 1865 a family portrait, modelled in grayish camaïeu, relieved by a few colored touches. In this picture the Marquess of M—is grouped with his wife and children on a park terrace. The reader knows how fond the English are of this style of portrait; very likely Mr. Tissot has been invited more than once in England to repeat the style which gave him so much success in France, but I have no particular information on the subject. All I could obtain from him was to give me the approximate number of his paintings. “I should find it difficult,” he writes me, “to make a report of my pictures; it would be a monotonous list of two hundred and fifty titles, which are not intended to express anything, for I avoid titles intended for effect as much as possible.”

The collection of photographs from Mr. Tissot's paintings has appeared in London, in three volumes arranged in the chronological order of his works.

Let us return to the enumeration of the paintings familiar to us from having figured



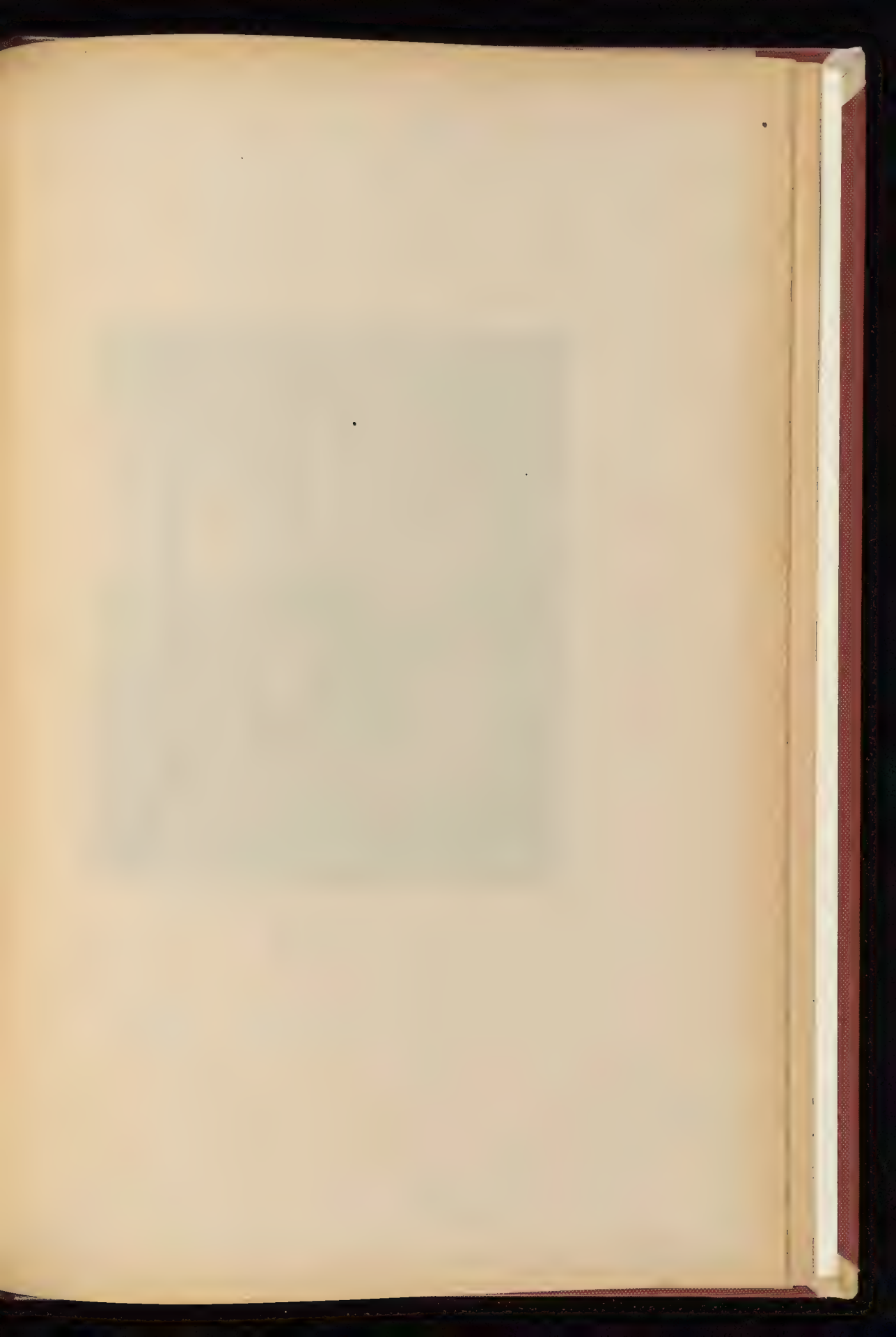














in Paris exhibitions. At the Salon of 1865, beside his family portrait, M. Tissot had the picture of "Ladies in Church." The next year he exhibited "The Confessional"; in 1867, "The Green Ladies", a modern study. The Salon of 1868 caused our painter to be much talked of: "The Retreat", a scene studied at the Tuileries, was strongly praised and strongly criticised; the drum-corps is waiting for the striking of the hour of the rat-tat-too. The rather delicate grace of the line of children was greatly admired, and the twilight effect was remarkably well rendered.

The Salon article of the "Gazette des Beaux-Arts" in 1868, defended the artist's right of taking his subject wherever he chose; occupying himself one day with the Middle Ages, another with the sixteenth or eighteenth century, to pass at once to the scenes of Paris society copied from the life. "Here is no such inconsistency as modern æsthetics could have us believe," wrote Mr. Grangedor, "between an interest in historical or archaeological studies, and the desire to be a painter of one's own time. It is to cut down strangely the field in which a naturalistic artist's choice ought to play, to fix him to the narrow limit of the horizon in which move the objects visible to his bodily eye, at the moment of working or the place of his residence. We are told "Enough of doublets and tunics and suits of arms!" If there be a higher truth which every work of art ought to contain, its character will be strangely misunderstood if we force it to depend on such and such a choice of form in the costume or dwelling of the personages whom painting cause to live again. The transient and accidental dresses and habits are of little import. What moves us in a work of art is just what is untouched by change and by destruction."

This something, I would add, is the power of organic life, of light, which are not to be moved; it is, besides, the individual feeling of the painter, leading him to one path and not to another, so that we recognize his style



among a thousand, even if he is an artist of past times, of whom we know nothing, sometimes not even the name. In a word, art is not the slavish imitation of things that can be seen and felt : the artist really worthy of the name, whether a "naturalist" or not, is he who adds something out of his own store to what he interprets of Nature. Tissot's elegance, imagination,



and the mantling life in his personages, are the qualities of his work which we prize. Another would not get these qualities even if he applied himself as closely as Tissot to Tissot's own models, with equal merit as mere painter or designer. These characteristics stamp him with his indisputable superiority, whether he manifests them in this period or that, reviving some episode of the past, or painting the manners of to-day.

This digression has tempted me far from my aim, and that at the very moment when I was about to finish with it; indeed I have but few more pictures to specify to close the list of the French works of Mr. Tissot, or rather those executed in France. The Salon of 1869 contained two: "A Widow," and "Young ladies examining Japanese curiosities." There were

also two in that of 1870: "A Party of Four," and "Young lady in a Boat," a charming picture which passed to an American, Mr. W. H. Stewart.

And that was all—the countrymen of Tissot were to hear nothing more of him, if it were not the report of scenes painted by him in England.

I should not pass in silence a fact which is altogether to the painter's honor. He bravely accomplished his duty in face of the enemy during the disastrous campaign of 1870; James Tissot made one of a company of

volunteers where were enrolled, with M. Ed. Turquet, a certain number of well-known artists, Jacquemart, Berne-Bellecour, Eugène Leroux, Vibert and Jacquet, and which comported itself valiantly especially at the battle of La Jonchère.

It was in 1871, after the Commune, that James Tissot departed to install himself in London.

It was not such a simple thing to do: his French origin was the cause of various unpleasant incidents, but after all he owes to his residence in England the full recognition of his talent, and what proceeds from the same, glory and fortune. His works were hung for several years, namely from 1872 to 1874 inclusive, in the corners, that is to say the place of honor, in the Royal Academy. For three successive years, the Grosvenor Gallery opened its doors to him, but one fine day, for reasons which we will state further on, he ceased to be invited there.



The waters-colors and the etchings of Tissot have done as much for his fame as the oil-paintings. Since 1864, that is to say the year when he began his modern subjects, we find him occupying himself with aquarelle. The series of his etchings dates from 1875; he was not obliged to suffer a moment's uncertainty about the fate of his "coppers": the English public, great gourmands of this sort of work, caught up his proofs instantly, without looking at the price, which is very considerable.

There could be no reason why Tissot should be inferior to himself in painting in water-color; the few works in this kind which we know from him give us a high opinion of his talent. We have sufficiently analyzed the various qualities which enter into his artistic individuality—an individuality the more valuable from being so fine in its essence. This is what sets him apart and makes him precious in the present time of art done with the fist, of slashing facility, of trowel-work in paint. He



is also to be congratulated on his conscientiousness and artistic probity, proved by working out his meritorious inventions with such strictness of technic.

It used to be a reproach uttered against Tissot that he did not know how to sacrifice anything. Often, it must be confessed, the criticism was fairly levelled: his pictures, having too much investigation applied to the details, made a kind of aimless flutter before the eye. Since then, Tissot has found the secret of unity; without renouncing that scrupulous technic for which we honor him, he has succeeded in making fine color-harmonies, untroubled by any discordant notes. This is a noteworthy advance, which sets the rank of the painter above discussion.

But I have not yet done examining the various sides of Tissot's talent. Only

a few months ago, an exhibition of his works at the Dudley Gallery showed a score of *cloisonnés* enamels of the most finished taste and purity. The British public was never tired of wondering at these charming things, and this even had the effect of doing a wrong to the more important part of that exhibition, which included twelve paintings, of which at least one was of the highest importance — "The Prodigal Son" a legend in four scenes, — several water-colors, and sixty plates. The Prodigal Son of Tissot's theme is of an English family of our time; it is the story of a young London

citizen deserting the paternal counting-room in chase of adventure in foreign countries; according to the parable, we see him return all in tatters, and vowing, a little too late, that he will never again drink his Hyson in the company of pretty Japanese tea-girls.

Though James Tissot has had such rapid and brilliant luck, it must not be supposed that he owes it to London alone. The celebrated collection of Sir Richard Wallace contains one of his pictures, "*Méditation*". Many of his works have been sold by Messrs. Agnew, the London Goupils, in Lancashire and Yorkshire. But all this is nothing in comparison with America, a country which catches up whatever falls from the hand of our eminent countryman, whether paintings, or etchings; the enamels will follow.

James Tissot has done the injustice — in the eyes of British painters and dealers — of importing a taste, for almost the first time, for "*Continental pictures*" on English soil. This sort of thing is not readily forgiven; especially since the taste in question has now developed considerably, so as to lead to a real neglect of the works of insular artists. Add to this that the market of the continent and that of America are almost closed to their works, it is easy to understand that the painters of the soil have closed their ranks strictly against all art that is not English. Tissot felt the effects

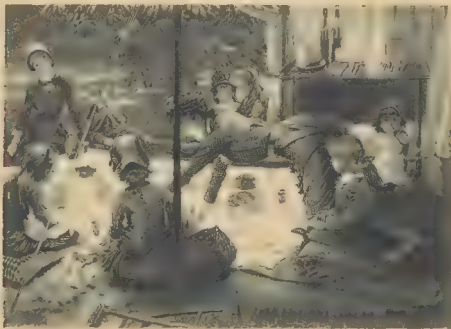


of this at the last exhibition at the Dudley Gallery, Artists as well as critics showed him something more than coolness. Perfectly as he renders English manners and physiognomies, his workmanship too plainly denotes his origin; and finding him rebellious to a complete merging of his individuality among the people he has lived with so long, the world gets tired of waiting. What an abominable crime, that this Frenchman chooses to stay a Frenchman in the midst of London. If only he would have his person naturalized, a thing that he could never do for his genius! This expedient has been a success with several who have tried it, and whom I do not wish to name.

But Tissot has remained deaf to suggestions which have reached him from high sources on this subject. "I am not one of those who change their country as they change their shirt" he writes to me. "I will never do so low a thing, and I will abide the consequence."

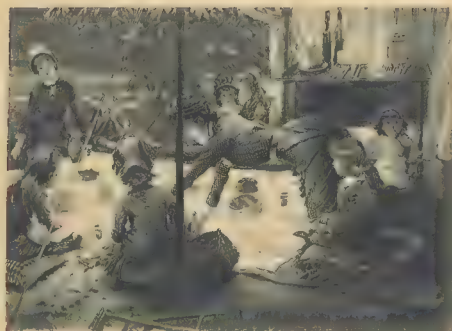
And that is the way to talk! This proud and honorable language makes us hope that we shall get again soon the valued artist whose characteristics have just been sketched: He certainly is doing honor to the French name on foreign shores, but nevertheless his absence is a wrong to the land that saw his birth, for the history of his performances is escaping us. The Society of French Aquarellists, in admitting him to its body, gives him a foretaste of the kind of welcome he would find among his countrymen. May he make haste to come back to us. With all our national forces we have none too many; and just his special talent is a specimen of that which is dying out, and which we are mourning for. Is not art growing feebler with us from penury of the inventive quality, and a certain drying up of the feeling for elegance?

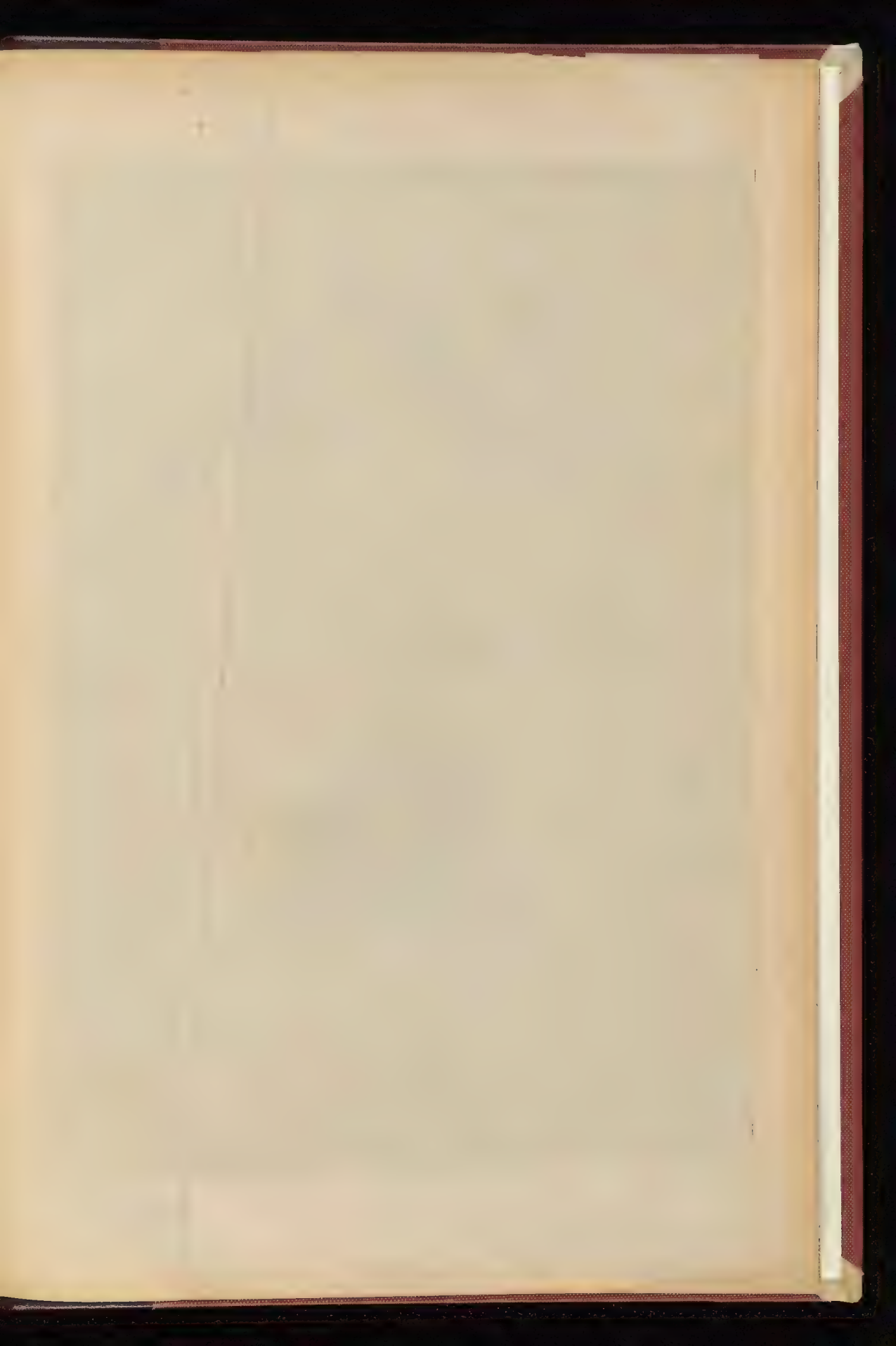
ALFRED DE LOSTALOT.













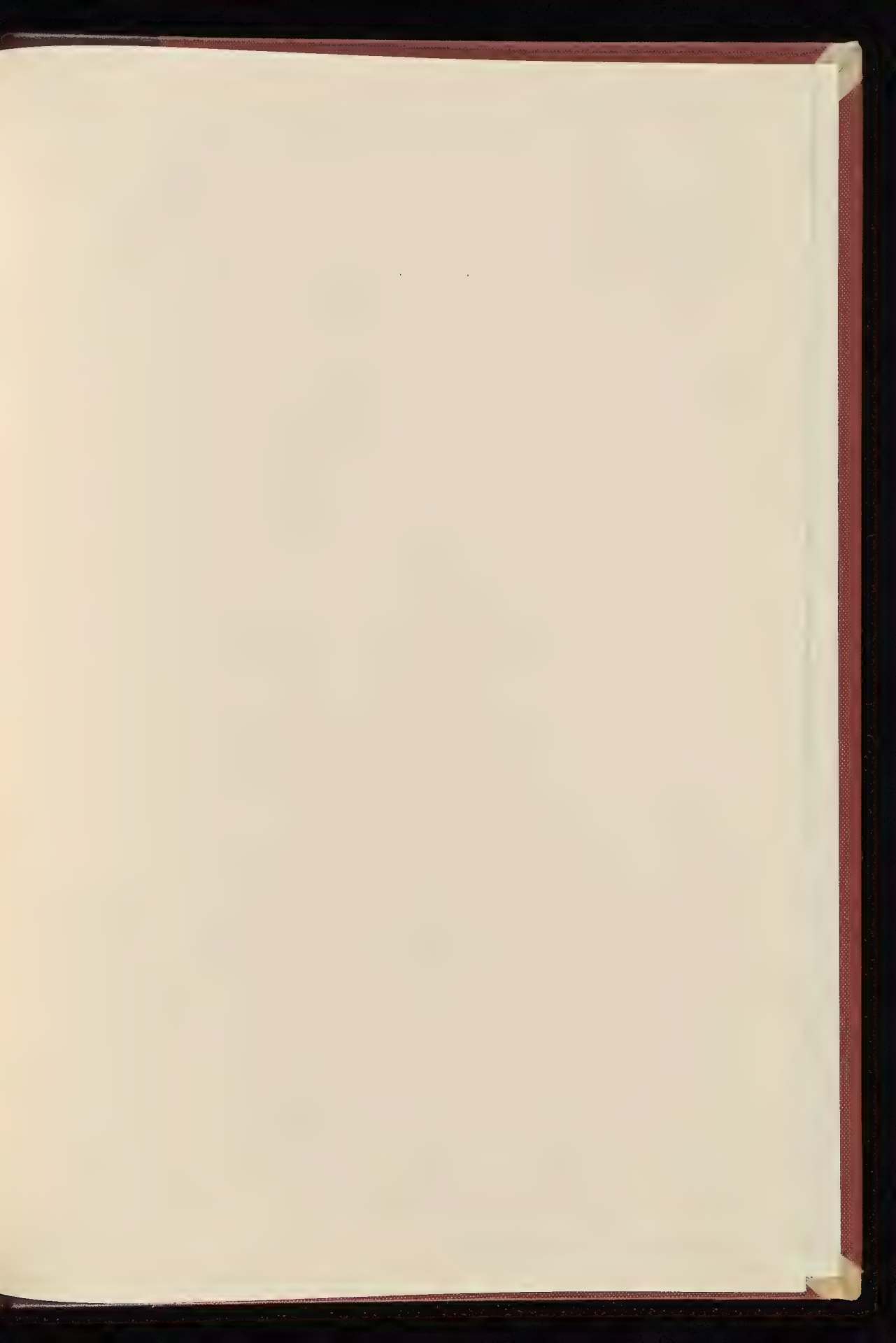


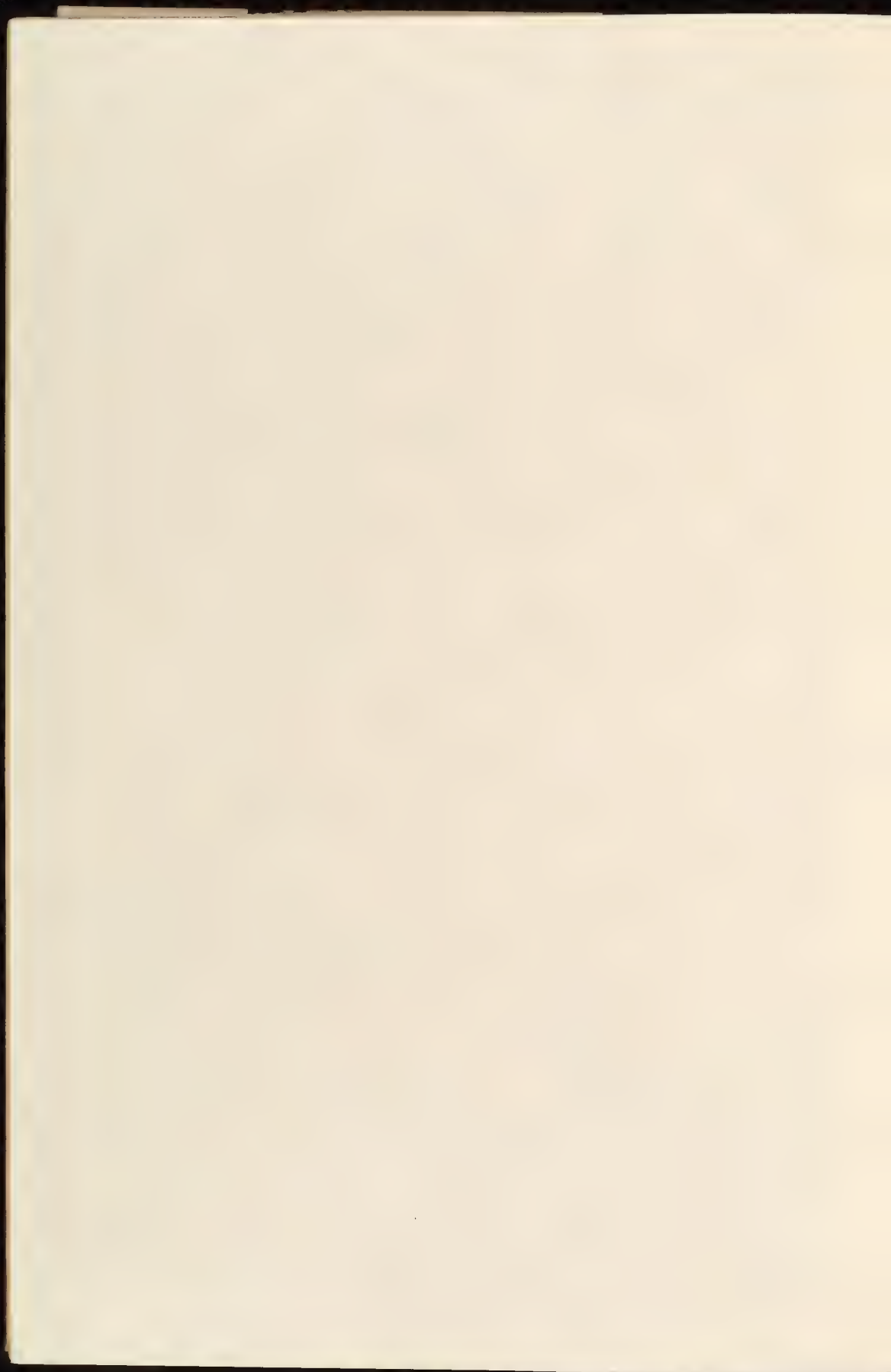
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